



Border Memories

By

Marion Muir Richardson



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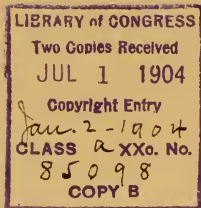
BORDER ❧ ❧ ❧ MEMORIES

BY

MARION MUIR RICHARDSON
(*MARION MUIR*)

DENVER, COLORADO
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BORDER MEMORIES

PART I



WESTERN POEMS

BORDER MEMORIES.

In the dreamy noon of summer
The mountain village stood,
When word came up from the valley
That broke its tranquil mood.

Turned the women pale and children
The rank there was to fight.
'Twas the red man's time of vantage
The absence of the white.

Then they barred the door and window
Hushed questions and replies.
And gathered the rusty weapons
In fear too dread for sighs.

But look, where the dust is rising
Sure God, the Strong One, hears,
And has sent them down so timely
The bearded mountaineers.

A child in the dread and gladness
That unforgotten day.

I have seen, since then, the sunrise
On a fair Atlantic bay.

Have walked on the frozen Hudson,
Heard the wind in Jersey pines,
Watched the shaven men of cities
Down Broadway send their lines.

And ruin has swept the lodges
Of fierce Arapahoes.
The whelp with the she-wolf dying
Let them weep their own wild woes.

But the village that was peopled
When Clear Creek sands were gold
Is gone, like the human river
That once through its canon rolled.

I can see the rabbit hiding
Beneath familiar floors.
And the wild dog make his burrow
In place of vacant doors.

And the friends who dare no danger
Can neither meet nor know
In the lonely land of mountains
Are lying far and low.

By the Humboldt or the Gila,
Or the broad breast of the sea,
Where never one brave rider
Can reach a hand to me.

I recall a sad old saying
I heard in camp one night,
When the moon on silent levels
Poured the fulness of her light :

“Who crosses the dark Missouri ;
Who steps on the Western shore

Has lost his peace forever,
And he returns no more."

For mine is the foot that wanders,
And mine a heart that grieves,
When youth and hope and friendship
Are dust, like the trodden leaves.

COLORADO

The dazzled morning strikes thy crown
O, Lady, clothed in living flame;
And gold and crimson ripples down,
To light the land where Cortez came.

The virgin glories of the snow
Lie silver-white across thy breast,
And in thine eyes the world below
Sees shining stars of faith and rest.

A vibrant harp of changing tone,
We hear thy voice in wind and wave,
Through all its wondrous music blown,
A warning solemn as the grave.

"The splendors of the skies are mine,"
She proudly sings above the storm,
"And mine the mountain ores and kine,
That crop the green in valleys warm."

"But let him fight who seeks for me,
With dread and pain, as heroes dare.
For pure and strong the soul need be
That hopes a reign like mine to share."

DOWN GRAND RIVER

No more my life, a broken thing,
Floats idly down the tide;
Like some lost boat the waves may fling
On waters wild and wide.

I see the rose of morning make
The desert all her own;
The broad, bright river's ripples break
On shores where gold is sown.

The scarlet cypress flashing through
The willows waving green,
And far La Sal against the blue
A crown of towers between.

The sad Dolores, miles behind,
Has merged her wave in this,
Before us fragrant valleys wind
Where rich fruit blossoms kiss.

The hands that bend the oars are mine,
Yet more than mine their skill;
The eyes that meet my glances shine
With firmer, stronger will.

And of my past, confused with cares,
I dream no more; I know
Another loyal heart now shares
My life's success or woe.

Traditions strange encompass all
The silent land we see;
The Spaniard's trail, the Aztec wall,
The tribes that wander free.

Beyond us, south, the stream is born
Whose secret no man knows;
So mighty are the walls, storm-worn,
That 'round its current close.

THE GOLD SEEKERS

The dim stars wheeled above the frontier post,
The wolf was silent, and the wind was lost;
The fire roared upward, lighting with its flames
Four white men's faces and four strong young
frames.

They told how deer were plenty, by the Blue
In upland forests, till a red man threw
In from the window ledge a stone that rolled
Straight to their feet, and it was glittering gold.
Mad with desire to find the parent vein
They parted; one went southward where the plain
Returns his fervor to the burning sun,
And he was found, before his search was done,
With shriveled fingers, digging in the sand,
And black lips pressed against the thirsting land—
No look of grace to mark him woman-born—
A thing of horror that the wolves had torn.
But one climbed higher, where the budding flower
Bends, in mid August, to the sharp snow shower,
Frost bitten and frost blinded, sheathed in ice,
Among the cold, white mountain-tops he lies.
The third, in luck, found fortune and a bride,
A dainty dame, white-handed, gentle-eyed,
Yet, woe for woman's truth, she brought him shame,
Ruin, regret, a life without an aim.

Still the fourth man is wandering on and on;
With eyes that seek the distance, or the dawn
Of some new day, in loneliness he goes
Through waste or crowd, he neither cares nor knows
 Up and down, and all around,
 Beat the free foot on the ground,
 While the white man hunts his grave,
 You have won your vengeance, brave!

RESIGNATION

"I thought," said he, "she was a thing
 Akin to music, light, and flowers,
Which some enchanted wind might bring
 A guest to such a world as ours.

"Her blue eyes lit my path awhile
 With radiance nearer than the stars,
But now she's married, and in style
 That somewhat tends to heal my scars.

A cattleman from 'cross the Range,
 Bald-headed, fifty, if a day,
And if she likes her fine exchange,
 Of course, I've nothing more to say."

PILGRIMS OF '60

Behind them shook the thunder that proclaimed
Fraternal strife; and his own homestead flamed
Beside the soldier's passage.

Not in vain—

But not all glory, raged that storm of pain
For Doubt was lord of right and wrong and froze
The springs of justice.

So a band arose

And, facing westward, down the aisles of day
Took the new land and undiscovered way.
Worn men, reduced by earlier alarms,
Pale women, with their children in their arms,
From North and South the young and old had come,
From Europe's utmost shores, and, sternly some
Like Sappho, leaped the Leucadian cliff, and swore
That Love and they were parted evermore.
More lone than Judah's elders, no wise head
Pointed their dangers, or their progress led.
Only the desert Prophet held in hand,
Hatred that fawned or struck at his command.
The wild herds swept across them, and the slope
Whereon the slim hares fed with antelope,
Hid wolfish foes, whose lean, brown feet had traced
The white man's sentence on the sandy waste.
But, nightly, pickets watched the still, cold stars,

Or broad moon rising, crossed with roseate bars.
Mornings of beauty like the primal hours,
They numbered; fluting larks and widths of flowers
Far rippling into seas of jeweled green,
Unlike the dull Atlantic I have seen.
And evening often saw the canvas dome
In isles of foliage find a shaded home.
Then music sounded, there the camp-fire lit
The song, the story, and the ready wit.

The dark earth cradled them, the fresh wind blew
From distant vales, rich, magical and new,
Till, in God's presence, creeds seemed over old,
And Time, relenting, gave the age of gold.
Where are they all? the laughing or the grave
Whose eyes flashed restless on the river wave?
Whose coarse suits covered hearts as grand
As followed Bouillon to the Eastern land!
Proved Fate their friend?

O Mountains of the Snow
Reply is yours! One gathered wealth, one woe,
Yet is life nobler for them; old and gray,
The heroes of a strife worth waging they.
They builded cities and along the plain
Marked all their march with groves and springing
grain.

Sing war who will! I have so weak a heart
Conquest like theirs I hail the better part.

TWO PICTURES

Among the cliffs a maiden stands,
The rich red flushing face and hands,
As sunset's shifting splendors fly
Through silver peaks and amber sky.
Beneath her break the lightning bars,
Above her sweep the silent stars,
The only rose without a thorn,
Her mountain meets the rising morn.

But all her heart is held below.
In dreams she hears the waters flow;
She plucks, in dreams, the broidered fern;
She walks the meads where poppies burn:
Yet well she knows that never more
Her foot may press the river shore,
No orchard bloom for her be born,
Nor fruited vine, nor yellowing corn.

Beyond a plain the reaper swings
His shining scythe in ample rings,
Yet ever turns through heated noon
Or mellow breadth of harvest moon,
To yon white peak that seems to be
The symbol of tranquility,
And knows who strikes its golden veins
Can ride the ruler of the plains.

Ah, dreamer! Fate has called thee long,
And Fate is patient, still and strong;
But the climber comes back never
To the meadows by the river.

THE EASTERN PLAIN

Dusk, when the heavy clouds are low with rain,
White, if the stainless sweep of snow be there.
Or glowing when a moon beyond compare
Recalls the softness of the Syrian's reign.
All golden with the living gold of grain,
Or green with meadow-islands when the air
Is trembling over corn fields tasseled fair,
Down to the seaward rolls that silent main.

With what forgotten agonies of tears,
What hopes, what strength, what beauty and what
 pain,
What mysteries of sorrow, what fierce years,
What living glories and secreted graves,
Since first they lured the chivalry of Spain
Thy depths were peopled, sea that hath no waves!

EAST AND WEST

Yes, quick—too quick—of act and speech am I,
Not fair to see, but darkened by the sky.
Yet, ere you blame me wholly, stop and think.
Your childhood knew the river's shaded brink,
The garden wall, the coming home from school,
Deep clover fields, and orchard alleys cool.
And mine? Up where the breath of June is cold
I saw the light, in valleys seamed with gold,
Where even the stream is darkened in its flow,
And men are buried by the blinding snow.
To me the odor of the brush fire tells
Of where the Platte goes rolling on in swells
Of welcome silver, sweeping leisurely
Through green Nebraska's lowlands to the sea.
The music I remember was the gale
In roaring pines, or far down in the vale,
The song of Indians as the tribe went by,—
The locust fifes, the coyote's midnight cry.
Not gentle were the faces that I knew,
Yet full of kindness, bearded, strong, and true.
The bare, brown bluffs were 'round me as I played
At evening by the camp, or, not afraid,
Flew through the morning on my pretty bay.

Would you, thus trained, not be the same to-day?
We do not choose our lives,—or well or ill.
You keep your books, and I my pony, still.

THE LOST SINGER

Across the western waste a song
Swept, with the wind, in days gone by,
And those who heard it, wondered long
Whence it awoke, so far and high.

The singer dwelt among the snows,
On broken dreams her heart was fed,
She saw, below, the mountain rose
Round lover's paths grow rich and red.

She looked beyond, and there a star
Shone clearer than the amber dawn,
She drew her robe across the scar
Where Pain had through her bosom gone.

And on her soul the light of God
Struck sweetly as the Star of old,
Along the frosted hills she trod
Down stony channels made for gold.

The sky-born eagle screamed at her,
The pine grove moaned a deep farewell,
And, as she passed, the juniper
Lent her, like spice, its sacred spell.

She moved, as moved the mountain stream
By rifted gorges steel has spanned,

So reaching the still waters' gleam
By the green fields of Sunset Land.

Rose-walled and purple through the night
She saw her own dream-valley lie,
Saw the low hearth, all warm and light,
And heard the tender cradle-cry!

The south wind blew the balm of rest
Upon her weary heart and brain,
But all the music in her breast
Died with her passion and her pain.

No more they pause among the pines
To hear her voice ring down the glen;
No more the frozen vapor shines
Between her and the homes of men.

Yet, though Love standeth at her side,
True Love who makes her cause his own,
She longs for something Fate denied,
The songs she learned in tears alone.

The red rose blossoms where she goes,
She hears the hum of honey bees,
Yet there, though well she loves the rose—
Hears, louder still, the Northern trees

Roar, overhead, their stormy song,
And April's snow-fed waterfalls
Loose all their rippling chimes along
The broken bar of granite walls.

. When ripe October's grapes are crushed,
Live rubies trembling into flame,
She thirsts for icy wells that gushed
On the stern highlands whence she came.

Or from some withered leaf that speaks
Of thickets starred with columbine,
Her thoughts stray off to silver peaks
Washed with the morning's swift carmine.

THE POET

He suffers; but his mournful days are crowned
By the diviner joy of those to be.
His heart may bleed, yet he hath power to see
All loves wherewith the universe is bound.
And tones that link the living sense of sound
With the deep secrets of Infinity,
Blow through his spirit, beautiful and free.
He knows, though all the world upon him frowned,
By the immortal burdens it hath borne,
How lofty is the soul that in him dwells.
Life he can lay aside—a garment worn—
And smiling, walk among the asphodels.
For glory and despair, all joy and woe,
And love and action are to him a show.

THE STORY OF A DAGGER

Where most languid stream that leaves
The blue canons of the West,
Platte his changing current heaves
Eastward through a vale of rest.

In the midst of acres wide
Stood a pleasant home of yore,—
Trees of beauty branched beside
Drooping down above its door.

By its gate the brier rose
Shook her tresses to the morn,
And the wild plum's spicy snows
Dropped above the springing corn.

East, a sea of prairie rolled
Where, beneath the summer noon,
Ran the green into the gold
And the gold into maroon.

West, the plain's imperial bar,
Mountains peered beneath the clouds,
And a roadway winding far
Shook all day with moving crowds.

Trains that sought the region grand,
El Dorado of that day,

Whose uplifted summits stand
In a brilliant heaven's ray.

Often, when those distant piles
Caught the sunset gloriously,
Till they shone empurpled isles
Floating in an amber sea.

From the fields his herds were grazing
Would the farmer's glances change,
And he wonder, idly gazing,
On the secret of that range.

Might there not, behind yon hills
Sleep a rich enchanted land,
Bright of sky, whose limpid rills
Eddied over golden sand!

Thus he watched each team that passed,
Winding, till it slipped from sight.
And its dust, to heaven upcast,
Seemed a beckoning figure white.

So there came and took possession
Of his soul a flame unblessed,
Fitful wishes, then a passion
For the riches of the West.

Tales of wonder hourly kindled
Fiercer fever in his veins,
Day by day his interest dwindled
In his own more fruitful plains.

Need we marvel then, or linger
O'er the picture of unrest?
How by day and night a finger
Pointed, pointed to the West—

As the land where men grew young
Breathing in a purer air,
And where Hope her rainbow hung
Round the rocks most rudely bare.

Loud the meadow starlings chanted
Matins to the meadow blooms,
And the morning wind, sweet scented,
Shook the cherry's long white plumes.

All its smiles the vale upon him
Showered the morn he left its bound,
As if it would fain have won him
From yon summits thunder crowned.

Scarcely noted he its sweetness,
Not at all the distant shade,
Springing on a steed of fleetness
Brief farewell his home he bade.

Proven pistols girded on,
And a dirk of curious make,
Round whose hilt of polished bone
Coiling wound a carven snake.

At her door the matron stood,
Watching him along the plain,

Fearing in prophetic mood
They would never meet again.

Years went by, the child who then
Lightly wove a flowery withe,
Now, grown up to mate with men,
Drives the plow or swings the scythe.

And the mother's nut-brown tresses
Show the silver touch of time,
But no word her watching blesses
From the mountain-girdled clime.

One day, travelers in that far land
Halted with a weary team
In a glen where beauty's garland
Hung above a snow-fed stream.

Wandering then, as each thought meet,
Underneath a crag that stood
Red as if all storms that beat
On its face had been of blood—

Found they, startled, on the stones
What had once worn human form,
Now a scattered heap of bones
Whitened by the sun and storm.

Time had done its wearing work,
Left no trace of grief or guilt,
But a curious, rusty dirk
With a serpent-twisted hilt.

It lies there on yonder table,
Right beside a pile of spar.
Can't you find it? Lift that label.
Move the mica.—There you are!

THE STORM MAIDEN

Her sad brow clouded by her heavy hair,
Her white lips mournful in their mystery,
And dark eyes haunted by a vague despair,
The daughter of a stormy land was she.

And God, before whom all her soul lay bare,
Saw it quite desolate, as some cold vale,
Where snows are ever flying wild, and where
The starting flowers are bitten by the gale.

Her angel mourned, "Alas, she must endure
Forever in her silent pride, unless
That up these heights shall climb a knight as pure
To break the prison of her loneliness."

And one there was; but lightning streaming down
Blinded her eyes and marred the light of his.
Their hands reached forward vainly, and the crown
Of her life's hope, it was her fate to miss.

IN THE FOOTHILLS

Pleasant it is to watch, when eve lets fall
Her luminous benediction on a wall
Of peaks, that seem, beneath that glowing heaven
The amethystine gates of the Forgiven.
Now, through sweet brier beds and tufts of thyme,
And pine groves, lisping undecided rhyme,
The west wind passes, gathering, as it goes
Each balmy breath the heart of summer knows.
A thousand herds are sleeping on the hills,
Ten thousand folded flowers beside the rills.
There is no sound but night birds past me flying,
Or the sweet wind in hollow canons dying.

At this dim hour, beneath uplifted brows
Of lonely mountains strewn with fallen boughs,
Round blazing piles the hearty hunters meet,
Each with his tale of some adventurous feat,
Wherein his single prowess shines supreme
As great Pelides in Homeric theme.
And now, toil-weary, those who all day probe
The metal secrets of our rolling globe,
In dreams see crevices, all glorious, shining
With the rich ore for which their hearts are pining.

Alas! even now, perhaps, where sands are dun,
And streams have fled before the furious sun;

Where heavens are pitiless and men unknown,
Some thirsting wanderer falls, and dies alone.
Still southward of those desolate dark caves
Through which the sad Dolores pours her waves,
The frontier mother, roused by vague alarms,
Catches her sleeping infant in her arms
And, breathless, wonders if a savage spear
Can have a point for what she holds so dear.

Away, dark visions, who can choose to dream
Of gloomy hours beneath so bright a beam?
Up from the eastern plain, a shield of fire,
The full moon rises, tipping every spire
Along the west with her unearthly light,
And to the deep glens driving denser night.
But the last fancy will not be forbid;
It goes to come again, half seen, half hid,
As I recall a story, that to me
Long since was told in wilder company.

One sunset eve, when Summer hung her boughs
Greenly above the Platte's unruffled tide,
Some travelers stopped and loosed their teams to
 browse
On the long grass that fringed the river side;
Then gathered brush to build the evening blaze.
Sultry the day had been; a heated haze
Hung red on the horizon, from which came
A yelling crowd, like beings born of flame,
Swept on the camp, and there was strife and sound,
Till in their blood the paleface shout was drowned.

Watching the silver fins that glanced across
Those smooth, bright waters, with no thought of
loss,

A child sat idly, and was snatched, a prize,
Just as her trance was broken by surprise.
Upward they bore her, in a swift career,
Frightened and struggling, till she raised her eyes
To the dark face above her and in fear
Hushed on her captor's breast her baby cries.
She to whose care she fell, a swart, stout dame,
Heard the child stammer Flora, as a name;
And she was pleased, she knew the speech of Spain.
Flor de la Vega, Flower of the Plain,
She called her thenceforth; and the flower grew gay
While wolves were howling on the bank where lay
What had been friend and parent, far away.

But the fine network of her brain was mazed,
The keen perceptions of her spirit dazed,
By the changed life about her; yet there stirred
Within her soul a passionate, deep pain
Whenever in their wanderings, she heard
An English word, or saw a white face plain.
Seldom this happened, for they held her close,
Far from the valleys that the white man chose,
Up where dim mountains, whirled about with snows,
Look coldly down upon the red, wild rose.
Till through the border posts a rumor went
Of the white captive in the Indian tent.
But they were watchful of her, and she knew

No home but tents through which the wild winds
blew ;

No friendship but their friendship, as she played
After their fashion, learned their speech, and strayed
Over steep hillsides, where ten thousand flowers
Drank in the sunlight through long summer hours.

The toil that bowed the Indian women was not hers :
She lay, in her own lodge, on downy furs,
Working bright colored wonders with her beads,
A miracle of workers, moccasins and belts,
For which young warriors came to trade their steeds,
Worth, even to white men, more than many pelts.
Till, fired with sudden fever, she would fling
Her labor down, and fly without to sing,
She knew not why, perhaps to keep back tears,
Or tokens of them from her guardians fierce.
One camping time when marksmen tried their skill,
She sprang before their target, with a start,
Hoping that of their bullets one might still
The dread, unhappy beating of her heart ;
But from that day was sacred ; as if spurned
Aside from her the leaden balls were turned.
Oft, drawing back her vestment she would mark
Her smooth, white arm, and wonder, "Why so dark
Are these, and I so fair?" Her mind was strange,
In its unreasoning breadth and rapid change,
As some great mountain cloud when sunset pours
His mellowing beam along her swarthy towers,
Confused, unearthly, flaming with red gold,
Hollow with caverns like the Dark One's hold.

Steps came behind her in the windy vales,
Far voices called her, and, through snowy veils
Of summer cloud, benign white faces smiled,
And white arms beckoned her, the lone, white child.
They loved who cared her; as they might a string
Of shining beads, or still more precious ring.
But she? She loved not them, nor anything
Save the great stars that silent rose and fell
Beyond the fragrant pines, the mighty swell
Of gales, and flowers that every season rolled
Their velvet glories over all the wold.
Yes, there were days when they were pressed for
time,

She rode among them, in her girlish prime,
Loosing her passion with her bridle rein,
And loved her life, and loved the rolling plain.

So she grew up; with instincts never tamed
Strengthening within her; till there flamed
At times such lustre from her eyes, it seemed
Through them a power more than earthly beamed.
At other times a vague, uncertain air
Hung round her, such as the delirious wear.
Dreams came to her of deeds before their time,
And she sang of them, setting to wild rhyme
The dim, great thoughts that broke upon her mind,
And youthful fancies beautiful but blind.
A clear, sweet voice she had, with notes that rang
Like bells across the water; when she sang
Her witch-like melodies, the frown would fade
From warrior brows, and bitter words be stayed.

Tall, straight and slender as the aspen tree,
Bright-haired as morning, outward charms had she;
Not the white beauty of the sheltered fair,
But that consistent loveliness, more rare,
Which made each movement graceful, even there.

One day, the squaws picked berries on the hill,
Their brown papposes played or wrangled shrill;
The dogs, the sleek, dun dogs that even now,
Among them eyed, distrustful, a white brow,
Lolled out red tongues and let the rabbit pass;
When the girl flung herself upon the grass,
Her white arms twisting round about her head,
Her figure rigid as if life had fled,
But her flushed cheek might scorch the cool, green
fern,

And through their lids the restless eyeballs burn.
Consumed with loneliness and fierce desire
For what she could not utter, something higher,
Stronger and better than her life had known;
In ecstasy of pain, a long low moan
She gave and caught the long grass in her hands
Dragged up, and cast aside its rooted strands.
Then on her throbbing brain fell sounds of song,
Deep, full and powerful as if a throng
Of chanting spirits swept above her there.
Startled, she rose, but silent was the air,
Save drone of insects or the false love tale
The passing waters murmured to the vale.
Yet in her soul those harmonies lingered still
As she, too, sang of her unguided will.

While women on the hillside stopped to gain
The meaning of that unfamiliar strain.

Not the unearthly note that tells
When high their savage frenzy swells;
Not the triumphal discord born
To hail the bleeding proof of crime,
Nor yet the dismal sounds that mourn
When chieftains perish in their prime.
But, mingled with the lapsing river,
Sweetly rise the notes and quiver
Through those stony-hearted hills
Like a cure for many ills.

“The winds that rock the mountain pine
They sang my cradle song;
The desert’s barren breadth is mine,
The herds that do no wrong.

But lightning splits the pine apart,
The deer give up their lives;
All things must wither and depart,
The wind alone survives.

O, wind that makes the flowers blow,
Warm from the summer sky,
Come tell me all that I would know,
Whence do I come, and must I die?”

* * * * *

The season was not good; scarcer grew game,
Springs were dried up, and forests felt the flame.

Locusts, descending from their native North,
Swept the scant pasture from the dusty earth.
So many things went ill; but there came worse
To the wild tribes, a winter like a curse;
That snapped the pine trees with its blinding gales,
And hung great fires in Heaven, with veils
Of floating frost between them and a land
Hard bound as iron, white as Death's long hand;
Death showed his grinning front among them, too,
And hunger thinned the many to the few,
Pinched their White Flower; but she yielded not,
Cheering them, guided by she knew not what;
Half princess and half prophetess, a soul
Spoke in her words, that want could not control.

* * * * *

Where the broad green prairie rolls to the west,
With the broad blue hills for a boundary line;
Where the air is full of a great unrest,
And the skies above, all glory, shine,
Spring came, soft footed, and the happy earth
Beamed benediction on her darling's birth.
The hills were clad in brightness; the wide plain
Shook off its frost and saw the sun again.
The rough dressed pioneer, whose plow turns o'er
Brown, matted furrows never broke before,
Forgot to hallo at his lagging team,
And looked around him, with a pleasant dream
Of how his labor, in a future day,
Should make those bare slopes blossoming and gay.
Yet idly poet sings the spring time, how

Tell the glad life that leaps in every bough?
Only as by a little twittering bird
Before the leaves have come, the heart is stirred
With faint remembrances of sylvan hours,
Of streams and butterflies among the flowers.

High on the mountains grass grew green; the pine
Rejoiced in sunbeams like a shower of wine.
The cactus crowned her thorns with rosy buds,
And pale anemones were waving in the woods.
But to the Indian heart no flower of spring
Or gentle breeze brought touch of softening.
The whites were coming, hemming them around
With all the tokens of their hated life,
Herds, villages, and the long fences bound;
So there rose quarrels ominous of strife
Too lightly heeded; even when their fires
Answered each other from the mountain spires.

It happened that a band, one early dawn,
Broke softly on the slumbers of the fawn,
Bent on a hurried mission; but they passed
Where, strange to them, a camp was newly cast.
Forth from the trees a bearded white man came,
Laughing, and quieting, with playful blame,
A little girl, blue-eyed and yellow haired,
Who, clinging round his neck, in terror stared;
And he drew back himself, when he caught sight,
Among the rest, of one, so strangely white.
Sullenly they went by, no laughing "hows,"
Only black glances shot from knitted brows.

But the maid turns, and well her lingering eyes,
Take in the picture that behind her lies.
Blue as the rolling billows of the main,
Between dim ridges showed the shimmering plain.
The nearer green of aspens budded new,
And sentry rocks, that darker shadows threw,
All lay, that morning, like a poet's theme,
Seen through the mist veil of a melting dream.

Her gaze has meaning; from those eyes of blue
Straight to her eager soul, like lightning flew
The knowledge of her story and her fate.
Vainly they guard her now, they guard too late.
The mysteries, that in past days combined
To vex, bewilder or distress her mind,
One look has disentangled; all is clear
As if a spirit whispered in her ear.
Through still night watches longing for escape
Devours her, taking every hopeless shape.
Paler she grew and thinner. In surprise
They marked the quick and restless glances of her
eyes.

Full of a brightness like the mid-day beam
Trembling and flashing in a falling stream.
But they were planning, and with sick desire
To learn the truth she watched the council fire.

One evening, storm was coming; all in storm
She stood on the camp's edge, a slender form,
With light hair streaming backward, her gray eyes
Darting the lightnings of uneasy skies.

Her horse his free neck curved, and with his foot
Struck the soft sod; one hand was on his rein
The other tightly clenched; her heavy suit
Swayed as the wind blew, and the shining mane
Of her black favorite mingled with her own.
She smiled; to her, at last, a plot was known
At sunrise, on the morrow to dash down
On the weak camp below the mountain's crown.
And low and wildly as the rising wind
Sounded the brief forebodings of her mind.

There is trembling in the valley,
There is terror on the height;
Where to-day the cattle dally
Blazing beacons start to-night.

Where all around, in dizzy ring,
They wheel about the fires,
And every one he makes a spring,
Across their scarlet spires.

But the dove upon the heights
Spreads her wings for lower land,
Fire for the red man; to the whites
Reaches out the lost, white hand.

The rain went by, and heaven, again all bright,
Over the cool world hung its lamps of light.
She crept forth then, determinately brave,
Wise with the craft her rugged training gave.
And when secure from sight she, pausing, tossed

Wildly her trembling arms to the dark sky,
And held them lifted; while her lips there crossed
An all imploring, agonizing cry,
That pierced above the ever living stars and drew
From some great source a courage strong as new.

Oh! well for her that, ere that need begun
She gathered strength that women rarely own.
Often she slipped and then, regaining place;
How hard the bramble thickets caught her hair,
Or dashed their thorny strokes across her face;
Onward, still onward, not a breath to spare,
Death lay behind her, unknown fears before;
One instant she stopped, panting, on the shore
Of a deep rivulet that hurried on
Like her, from the broad mountain's caverned stone,
And stood confused, as one may be who strays
Alone, at midnight hour through storm vexed ways,
One moment, dazzled by the lightning's glare,
The next, bewildered in Tartarean air.
Looked up and trembled at the stars; looked round,
Fearing a foe in every natural sound.
Then stumbled blindly over stones and briers,
That, catching, stung her flesh like fiercest fires.
At length the plain was gained; damp with chill
 dews,
As one nears Fate, constrained, yet would not choose
Draw back, still safe, when to advance were pain,
She sees the camp fire sparkle on the plain.
The white tents fluttering, the noisy blaze
Reddening the outlines of each bearded face;

Then she remembered that her speech was strange,
And faltered forward, breathless, within range
Of the keen scout, who, in his quick alarm,
Sent his sure shot beneath her round left arm.

* * * * *

Not vain her daring; when the morning shone
The Indian came, to find his victims gone.
But she, who saved them, lay, and lies, clay-cold,
Like all her people, where the prairie mold
In summer time breaks into various bloom,
Star lilies, blood red pinks and lupin's waving
plume.

And on, beyond that dolorous river,
Whose lonely wave must wind forever
Through a wilderness of pain,
When the June primrose, on the plain
Whitens at evening, they will tell
Of the White Flower that used to dwell
With them, but vanished through a spell.

* * * * *

They bent above the body that had been
So fair a plaything for unhappy fate
They guessed her errand and they made a screen
To hide it safely from dishonoring hate.
But none forgot the vision of a child
Who, like their children, might have looked and
smiled

And heard love murmurs in the faithful heart
That now was stilled, unsanctified, apart.

THE WEST-BOUND TRAIN

A sweep of smoke, a thunder roll,
A scream that shook the eagle's nest,
A giant under man's control—
It dashed across the desert west.

The wild dogs and the watching tribes
Like driven dust before it flew,
The wealth of kings, the skill of scribes
It bore to lands they never knew.

The golden grain beside it sprang,
The mountains opened up their stores,
And, like the sound of music, rang
The children's feet on happy floors.

Oh, brethren of the moving flame,
The world's uncounted chivalry,
You bear, no matter whence you came,
The message of the brave and free.

When over lone Siberian plains
The headlight pours its flashing ray,
Despairing captives from their chains
May rise to greet a brighter day.

Speed on, speed on, till earth has found
That justice cheaper is than war,
Till Labor's strength, with wisdom crowned;
Shall be more potent than a czar.

MARSHALL PASS

Mother of rivulets rapid and strong!
Mother, too, of clouds and of whirlwinds dire,
To whom, long since, did thy birth belong—
To primeval seas or the central fire?
Far down thy heart lies hid the virgin gold,
More deep, more worth, the secret of thy soul
Waits for Time's crowning moment to unfold
The symbol of a world's supreme control.

All robed in violet, silver and rose
Thou wert as a palace of Peristan.
When, over the crest of thy silent snows,
Went, as the wind goes, the thought of a man.
Then the desert woke for a thousand miles,
For the woodman's axe and the ringing drill
Set echoes atremble in green defiles
And shook the columbines down from the hill.

Then East and West were wed with vibrant steel,
Electric paths, whereon, from sea to sea,
Each hope the rising generations feel
Goes singing on to grandest victory.
Spun thro' and thro' with flying threads of flame,
The rolling smoke-drifts clamber to the skies,
Across the great "divide," where once there came
Naught but the sound of Nature's symphonies.

But oh! the past, but oh, the silver hairs
Of those who wrought thro' disappointed years,
Who conquered strange and overwhelming cares
To leave us great, heroic pioneers!
Forget them not, when red the sunset flower
Blooms in the west, and every shattered mass
Puts on the glory of an aerial tower,
And night winds wake the pines on Marshall Pass.

TWILIGHT

Large, in the rosy air above the pines
The stars come forth, and warm September's
glow,
Fades on the purple heights where chill winds
blow,
No sage for us can read yon heaven's signs,
For you, O friend, no happy fireside shines;
Alone you face the breadths of barren snow,
The shaken crags, the hatred of the foe
That clings to worth as death damp to the mines.
But through the sorrow and the doubt I see
The steadfast courage that subdues despair,
The stern content that only heroes wear—
Types of a faith whose veiled divinity
Breaks through the clouds that darken life below,
The White Christ's pity for all woman's woe.

A MIDWINTER MEMORY

"My little love, can you remember
The time we parted in December;
The sky that lay, like one long ember
 Beyond the pine groves of the West?
And, like our hopes, the light that slowly
Sank into silence, cold and holy
On all the hills where high and lowly
 Looked gladly for the Christmas guest?

I know, not all the sun land's powers,
Not thousand thickets sweet with flowers,
Nor storm, nor time, nor sun, nor showers,
 Not stern adventure, strange as death,
Nor sea, nor shore, nor years, that, lying
Behind me, seem like phantoms dying;
Before me, seem like shadows flying,
 Have dimmed the love that then drew breath.

Again the royal words awaken,
True as when heard in groves forsaken
Before by steam the waves were shaken:
 'There are no floods where love can drown.'
Across the world my thoughts go roaming
My heart turns back, like swallows, homing,
To that still crimson winter gloaming
 To Love that lived when Hope went down."

A FRONTIER WIDOW

The sun had slipped behind white peaks,
A winter wind was on my cheeks,
A cold white sky above my head
The frosted earth beneath my tread.

Alone I watched the darkening road,
No living thing along it showed;
Half white with snow, half withered, gray,
A thicket stood beside the way.

A wan face, strangely drawn with fear,
From out those branches seemed to peer,
And a gust of wind, that shivered by,
Rang in my ears a faint, death cry.

Then a fearful dread I dared not name
Stone cold upon my heart-hopes came,
I trembled, but I beat it down
Like one who fears lest reason drown.

A sharp shot thrilled along the plain,—
A horse flew past with hanging rein,—
I knew it all; beyond the hill
He lay, my helper, cold and still.

Alone, without one tear I knelt,
But Oh! the weight of grief I felt.

No word can tell, no spirit know,
The keenness of my widow's woe.

I never dreamed that pain so stern,
A woman's heart could live to learn.
Only that morn he kissed farewell,
I clasped him, dead, when evening fell.

Through the long night watch there I stayed,
His dear head on my bosom laid,—
While frost fields drifted like the sea,
And called on God to pity me!

I heard the whirlwind's cruel swell,
I heard the snarling coyote's yell,
But who brought help, or when, or how,
I cannot tell; I did not know.

I only wish no morrow's sun
Upon my grief had ever shone;
That I had perished, kneeling there,
The snowflakes frozen in my hair.

THE RETURN

“Why, bearded stranger, do you linger
So lonely here at close of day?
Who owns these fields,—lives in yon mansion
That rises tall across the way?”

Oh! long ago, when thirst for treasure
Was lit in me by a passing torch,
I left, with dreams of rich returning
To the gray old homestead’s vine dark porch.

But fortune, somehow, fled my grasping,
Like the lying river the traveler sees
Flash in the dry plain’s ashy hollows,
Its margin set with phantom trees.

For long, long years have I roamed afar,
Heard the piercing yell of Indian braves,
And turned away, where the stretching prairie
Is thick with sad, pioneer graves.

I’ve stood on the Red Land’s mighty mountains,
And viewed the glow of her soft, green vales,
Made lovelier still by the great desolation
Of deserts swept with sand-winged gales.

I made few friends in the strange, wild places
Where I sought the glittering ore,

But at length I saw, with exultation,
My gathered gains grow more.

Not the fertile slopes of the great Sierras,
With wind from the South sea warm,
Were as fair to me as the quiet valley,
That held my father's farm.

So here I came, my heart delighted,
With thoughts of the coming joy,
All the length of absent years forgetting,
That I was gray, who left a boy.

Wild birds above were singing clearly,
A west wind waved the blossoms fair,
But in vain I searched the well known meadows,
No one that I knew was there.

Even the old home lay a ruin,
All were gone, forever gone;
The last bright hope of my wild existence,
Fell dead by that cold hearthstone.

But, lingering here, I almost fancy
Youth may return ere daylight fly,
For I've walked like one in dreams, and wakened
To find that life has passed me by.

Like a withered weed in the whirlwind rolling,
With no resting place or care,
I must turn again to rove wild regions,
Too weary for despair.

FATE

No more, no more, O sister of my soul,
 Not that I doubt thee, for the sun shall roll
 Back in his course ere I grow cold to thee;
 But all thy shaded pathways weary me.
 Thine be the vesper song, the morning chime,
 The star-leaved lily, cloistered in her prime.
 In quiet-breathing incense; mine, ah mine!
 The dark breadths of the storm-encircled pine.
 On hills that hold the sunbeams, where the stream,
 In falling, thunders down the eagle's scream.
 Or plains where heaven and earth have equal fires
 Like lovers, burning with unblest desires.

Nay, turn not from me in such sad surprise,
 On waste and brightness even guidance lies.
 Fate is the wiser; as she rules we are,
 And weak the soul that seeks with her to war.
 Daughter of God; first-born, immortal queen.
 The keys of Night and Morn she holds serene.
 To me the world has never been so kind
 That I, for it, my wayward choice should bind.
 Can one the desert nursed be meek and tame?
 Better swift death from leaping tongues of flame
 Than fret my heart in silken bondage, No!
 It is my doom, my glory and my woe.
 I kiss the hand that holds me—but I go!

THE MOUNT OF THE HOLY CROSS

Most faithful friend, All-loving God,
Who marked for us the path we trod,
The grandest of Thy gifts appears
Outlined among these snowy tiers.
We followed fate, we followed Thee,
But doubtful, weak, and worn were we.
No guiding light before us shone,
No prophet led securely on.
We faced the wind, the rain, the hail,
The dogs of hell that crossed our trail;
We lined the plain with dust and graves
And slaked our thirst in bitter waves;
At night the coyote laughed aloud
Beneath the dead man's flapping shroud,
And o'er the river of the hills
The ravens hung like gathering ills.
They told us there that Thou wert far,
And dead and stern as some cold star;
But white above the sullen storms
Thy Cross upheld its saving arms.
O Thou to whom all things are one—
The lone, dim plain, the mine, the sun—
Who best can tell what pain it cost
Here for the death-fires of the lost,
To light on Christian hearth the flame

More mighty than a world of shame,—
We crave no island lapped in balm
Nor lazy valley's dreaming calm,
But life, the stirring and the sweet,
The track that bounds with flying feet.
Give back the trusted and the true;
The vanished friends whom once we knew,
The strength that laughed in danger's face,
The youth that breathed of primal days;
Life, life, Eternal Life bestow,
And welcome be the Cross below!

A REVELATION

It happened once a very grave professor
Consented to improve a lady's mind.
He wrote her essays upon Karl the Blind,
Louis le Grand and Edward the Confessor.

And she discussed, in quite peculiar diction,
The mines, Moses, high art, and life out west.
They sought to meet, for either often guessed
The other might be a delightful fiction.

But when he saw her, little, pert and merry,
He cried: "So young, oh heavens, I am lost!"
Wailed o'er the stamps her perfidy had cost,
And rushed away and joined a monastery.

A MAID OF THE MOUNTAIN

I see her standing, those bright tresses playing
Loose at the pleasure of the summer gale,
Or brown or golden, as the sunbeam, straying
From wave to wave, is luminous or pale.
Around, great rocks, above her warm, blue skies,
Beyond, dark mountains where the eaglet cries.

Down to her feet, in swells of silvered green,
The mountain meadow rolls its living tide,
All crested, as sea wave has never been,
With the rich color of its flowering pride.
Ah, child, come with the future sun or showers,
Not twice the cold world grants such happy hours!

No close, dim bondage blanched that rounded cheek,
Where health's brown beauty laughs at envious art,
Or checked the step, or taught the lips to speak
The idle falsehoods of an empty heart.
Slender and tall, as ancient art has drawn,
The proud young Huntress of Arcadian dawn.

Her childish playmates were the gray winged doves,
Red fragrant roses and the hare-bells blue;
Beneath the boughs of shadowy alcoves,
She learned but God's great lesson—to be true;
And, laughing, tosses back her wind-blown hair,
Dear to my heart, most innocent, most fair!

THE RAILROAD MAN

The ringing rails beneath his feet
Are spun about the world;
All shapes of life are his as fleet
His train is past them whirled.

A thousand hopes, a thousand fears
Are held within his hands;
He rides the cloud whose shade inspheres
The loves of many lands.

The valleys green, the rolling tides
Are spread before his eyes;
The thunder of the mountain sides
Is with him as he flies.

Past summer sweeps of vine and corn,
Past breadths of barren sand;
For him the silver day is born,
The moving night is spanned

By stars that shed their stainless light
On all the homes of men.
The city's line of lamps at night,
The cottage in the glen.

And thoughts awaken in his brain
The dull crowd cannot know;

The hand that holds the swaying train
Has been where brave men go.

A brother's earnest grasp at need,
A soldier's loyal heart:
High on the Future's page I read
The Iron Hero's part!

ON THE OVERLAND ROUTE

A void horizon bound a brazen sky,
The land was burning; silence and the air
Throbbled with the heaviness of near despair,
When, by a nameless grave, in days gone by
I stopped and thought it dread and sorrowful to lie
Like the poor clay that slept unhonored there,
Far from the kindly rites of bell and prayer,
But that was idle, since all flesh must die.

For all the fountains of the fair green earth
Flow out of meadows mounded thick with graves,
Round all the summer isles of bloom and mirth,
Like rising doom the hungry ocean raves,
And over life, the bridal and the birth,
The funeral shadow of the cypress waves.

THE TRAIL—1860

"I ride," she cried, "by night and day,
The storm wind roaring in my ears,
My life, my soul I gave away,
Where others give their tears.

"The false, smooth Platte, in blood-red pools,
Gave back the sunset's burning cloud,
When there I made my husband Jules
A grave without a shroud.

"And I must ride, I cannot rest
While he lives on who left him slain,
And woe to him, or host or guest,
Where we two meet again.

"The bones that bleach by Laramie,
The lean, dun wolves that tear the dead,
Before me like a sentence be,
Unless his blood be shed.

"I ride through valleys full of birds,
By riven mounts where thunders groan,
By meadows brown with grazing herds,
But am not all alone.

“The flash that blazes through the night
Shows me again those glazing eyes.
Oh, love, who had no burial rite,
I give you sacrifice!”

THE FRONTIERSMAN

Round him the sea-like prairie sweeps afar,
The trackless silence echoes to his shot.
His home is reared in glens where men are not,
The blazing hearth, the door without a bar,
And board where health and hope companions are
Through elemental conflicts; the green plot
His ploughshare breaks is virgin as the spot
Where primal man with nature first made war.

Yet sounds of life prophetic strike his ear;
He hears the children playing in the vale,
The bells of browsing herds along the trail,
And, in the densest grove that shades the deer,
Sees plenty throned, with golden weight and scale
Mistress of marts and shining miles of rail.

THE COLONEL'S GRANT

"Do well," you say; is there no end of doing well?
Must we be ever straining to some pinnacle
Set high in blinding heavens? rather those prevail
Who talk with me of leisure. Listen to this tale
Of chance, high hope, and fortune that has surely
 been,
While you, who know the land, I leave to fix the
 scene.

Rolled the valley southward, green as old Canaan's
 corn,
Rose the mountains round it, from the clouded
 breadths of morn.
When two riders checked their horses on the dawn-
 lit rise,
Looking down the glorious miles in rapturous sur-
 prise.
Desert colors shot the nearer grasses through and
 through,
Burning purples, gold and scarlet, rose and white
 and blue.
Trees of oldest growth were there, a leafy-mantled
 throng,
And, from out their shadow broke the water's sud-
 den song.

Snake for subtle stinging, but a wolf for swift
retreat

Was the foe whom they had chased, through storm
and fiercer heat.

Comrades were they, bound by friendship, yet, who
saw them there,

Might fancy Night and Day had made the differing
pair.

Straight and sinewy both were, but the olive tint of
Spain

Darkened one whose lips could curl with passionate
disdain.

Fine of limb and feature, yet with something cruel,
too,

In the cold composure of his fine eyes' midnight hue.

But the other, tawny-haired and tawny-bearded,
stood

With his keen gray glances taking in the valley's
good.

Cried the stouter Northern, eager as men do in
dreams,

"Valley full of color, fed with ever-living streams.

Could I claim you, I would build me here a city fair,

Full of joy and plenty, far from hunger and des-
pair!"

Slowly smiled the dark Castilian. "*Senor Colonel,*"

(Light he gave what he held lightly) "take it and
do well!"

Fitter for a garden seems, in truth yon glowing swell
Than to serve as kennel for those ravening dogs of
hell."

Southward slipped the brown Apache, swiftly passed
the years,
Marked by patriot's passion and all a Nation's tears.
Somewhat did the dreamer, broke the sod and cut
the hills.

But man is only mortal and life has many ills;
And he lived to see across those slopes of virgin
bloom,

Trampled trenches, scarred and seamed by dump and
flume.

Where he planned fair household walls and house-
hold ways should stand,

Raged the greed of gold, the coarse debauch, and
murderous hand.

While his children, wronged and orphaned, vainly
plead to-day

In the courts of thieves, for bread to keep sharp
want away.

THE SHADOWS OF THE SUNSET

Woman born among the roses, rosy-cheeked and
rosy-crowned,

Looking on whom men exclaim: Behold, true womanhood is found!

This the woman's place and glory, this her happiness
and bound.

I could mock with bitter laughter, did my heart not
break in pain

For the sad fates of the silent who can never smile
again—

For the tales of lonely Kansas, drifted by the snow
and rain.

When the stars of midnight tremble, and the cheek
of morning pales,

I can hear them calling, calling, as the wind, repentant, wails

By the awful Lake of Donner, and the yawning
Utah vales.

Mothers of a new-born Nation, crowned with snow,
and clad in fire

By that Sun-god whose old altars burn beside the
Christian spire,

And whose feet the warm sea waters kiss with indolent desire.—

They have heard the singing bullet, they have
watched their dead alone,
Under heavens seeming marble, God, an image over-
thrown;
In the distance looming terror more than song has
ever shown.

They have seen the babes they cradled brained before
their hopeless eyes,
Smoke from charring homesteads all along the line
of prairie rise,
Tasted many deaths, undying, in the horrors of sur-
prise.

Through the land of lying waters, through the des-
ert's cloud and flame,
Beaten brown by wind and weather, weary and
athirst they came,
To what had been women bringing back an hour of
sacred shame.

Aye, they suffered; but they conquered, let the bor-
der cities tell
Where they sowed those gracious flowers women
know and love so well,
How upon their shining steps the dews of benedic-
tion fell.

And their daughters, straight and ruddy, nursed at
breasts the frost wind bared,

Meeting danger as a playmate, daring all that men
have dared,
Can their free-born courses by your petty compasses
be squared?

Man of men the ruler! Poet, far more generous and
true,
You shall walk the deep-sea hollows, you shall climb
the clouded blue,
Ere the slightest woman's heart will yield its secrets
up to you.

FIRST OF HIS RACE

Above his head, about his feet
Was blinding light and withering heat.
The way was dust, the blackened hide
Clung to the ribs that blanched beside.
The snake slipped rattling through the grass.
The gray wolf grinned to see him pass.

Yet none the less he cried, "I see
Whereon a city's wealth shall be;
For here shall rise the steeple towers,
And here sweet waters feed the flowers
That spring where homes of love are won—
But what *my* fate when all is done?"

THE FIFTY-NINER

Go flaunt, fair weather dreamer, your tawdry
plumes elsewhere,
Not for you our valleys, not for you our golden air.
You think my words ungracious? not meant to
please are they.
Why should I make them sweeter? O grave con-
temner, say?

While you had fruit and flower, we walked the sands
alone,
Satan's burning levels little worse than we have
known;
We were dying and you cared not, tortured, and you
smiled.
Ask the giant's friendship, you, who scoffed and
spurned the child.

You sent us out the wretches from reeking prison
cells,
Shame from your swarming cities and all your
floating hells.
Deaths there have been by the mine, the canon and
the plain.
Spots where cool green grass will never cover up
the slain.

And the workers of these things among you have
no fears,
Holders they of office; ours to cry in wrath and
tears
That God is patient, and his eternal years are slow,
Dense our ignorance you say : Ah, well it may be so.

But we know right well one simple lesson you have
taught.
You are purchased, soul and body, like the wares you
wrought,
We respect your judges, we, who see them daily sold,
Haggling, learned tricksters, for a handful of our
gold!

No, for empty pomp and praise go seek some gentler
shore,
Warm the Western hearth for him who leaves false-
hood at the door ;
Evil must and will be, all along the march of time,
But we never called it Justice or made a creed a
crime.

THE PIONEER'S FIRESIDE

Down from the glowing bars, like hope and trust,
Drop the live coals and crumble into dust,
Scenes in the embers—ah, what dreams can be
In all Arcadia like the past for me?
I hear the wild birds thrill the morn once more,
The swift wave washing the untrodden shore.

I see the white trains winding—on the slope
The strong gold miners, warm with youth and hope.
Oh, friends beside the Texan border or the sea,
Turn from your vines and cast a thought to me;
Old friends, old hopes, and even old foes are dear,
Bringing those half-remembered days more near.

The fair, new land that reached before us then,
The golden sunset, and the mountain glen
Rosed with exultant dawn, odorous flowers
Sown thick as summer raindrops in the showers,
And the fresh valleys that before our eyes
Glowed with the vernal tints of Paradise.

Now by the river side, where long ago
Swept the dark slayer of the buffalo,
Smoke the broad walls of cities, and not now
Will troopers make the tall, green grasses bow;
But I am of that life, and, blindly, I
Fought in the ranks beneath whose march I die.

No, die not lightly! Powers of the storm,
Blood that has braved you beats in this right arm,
Sound as the pine-bough under cumbering frost.
The courage lingers though the cause is lost.
Yes, right or wrong, I love my life so well,
I would live always could I grasp the spell.

LOOKING WESTWARD

Throned Lord of destiny, a leader lost
From Gothic story, slept beneath the walls
Of mountains whitened by the torrent's falls.
Therein he read, whose step the cavern crossed,
Above the dreamer's brow a text engrossed:
"Beware! beware!" the mystic warning calls,
"Of idle entrance to enchanted halls;
Break not the silence, lest thou rue the cost!"
Washed with wild waters are the hills that hold
My future in their keeping; learn them well,
For in them fight the powers of heaven and hell.
And none can tell, through all their summits cold,
If the dark strength that lies reserved below
Will rise for me with welcome or with woe.

THE LADY OF THE PLAINS

“Whence am I? whence, ah who indeed can tell
Of the lost passion whose remoter spell
Hath wrought me into being? O, my soul!
Whence are the clouds that through thy chambers
roll?

I only know that from the first mine eyes
Looked out upon the world in vast surprise.

The storm hath beat upon me; yet mine arm—
Look! hath it not as round a grace and warm
As if it rested under cradle down?
Yet, ah! beware of me; a braided crown,
Soft eyes and glowing lips they call mine own,
No more than this thy Summer choice hath known.

The breast that nursed me moulders in the sand,
Where the wild flowers, that light the desert land,
Lift up their scarlet torches from her heart;
Where shy brown lizards under sunshine dart,
And where the cactus, from her stinging lobes,
Shoots the June splendor of her golden globes.

For I have seen the painted horsemen wheel
By shallow fords, and loved the sight of steel,
The burning hazes, and the violet hills,
Through which, at eve, the soul of mystery thrills,

Have watched the large moon rising fair and full
Of the young passions that no law can rule.

And through my brain the questionings are hurled
That flashed across the morning of the world.
And in my heart is fever and a cry
For something graver and more calm than I.
So fierce and free my tameless pulse hath played,
I turn to thee, of mine own self afraid.

Then, if thou hast a power to command
The stormy current, lay on mine thy hand.
For I am faithful; 'tis the only law
To which God sealed my spirit ere I saw.
But woe to thee and me, if low desires
Eat out thine honor with their traitor fires!"

A BORDER KNIGHT

Farewell to roofs that cluster brown below
The lichen-dappled cliff! Blow on me, blow,
Strong gales that dash the cedar and the pine;
No more be thought of cradled softness mine!
For I have wandered where the beardless dwell,
Found truth and falsehood, loved perhaps too well;
And now, enamored of thy golden morn,
Land of lost youth, unreckoning mortal scorn,
I come to thee; henceforth my strength is thine,
And, by the smile that meets me, thou art mine.

Fear? when I saw the forest's quivering green
Cut by the keen blue lightning, or have been
Inch-near the coiling snake, or felt the whirr
Of bullets past me, it was with a stir
In every vein, a glory of the soul
Worth all the joys that languid lives control.
Flame-burdened clouds that freak the western skies
With spires of shifting splendor; stars that rise

On mountains glassed in crystal, leaf and tree,
Be now my kindred, of like fates are we!
My love's cheek flushes when the dawn rose beams
On virgin snow, her laughter is in streams,
I hear her footfall when the russet cones

Drop from the spruce bough, pattering over stones.
Not loving men, nor hating ; from my door
May want go filled, to think of me no more.

Ha ! storms are rising on the great land seas ;
I go to face them, but my heart is peace.

A YOUNG POET

I see, between the tremulous green leaves
Fair, fleeting faces and elusive gleams
Of mocking water-witches under streams.
The golden mist of song about me weaves
Her visionary excellence, deceives
My soul with fancies throned above the morn,
To me as novel as the rose new-born,
Yet haply to mankind as old a story
As the proud piles of Libya's sunken prime
Vague hopes, whose unsubstantial glory
Have wakened singers from the dawn of time ;
And then expressionless and dark my soul
Faints with aspiring far beyond control.

A WESTERN NEW YEAR

Oh, young New Year, sealed with the mystic nine,
The gathered riches of the past are thine!
Thy promise brightens broad by land and sea,
May strength to right the wrong be born with thee.
From the green vine leaves of the dreaming South
To the chill waters of Columbia's mouth,
We give to thee the future of a land
Whose past was thrilled with aspirations grand.

I see the lifted clouds of morning hang
Above wide meadows where the free bird sang
Perchance ten thousand years before they came,
The mighty Pioneers, whose touch was flame
That brightens where it passes. There are walls
Of hundred streeted cities where the calls
Of Nature sounded in my childish days.
And through these many changes I can trace,
As sprang the genii from Aladdin's lamp,
A vast new life leap upward from the camp
Wherein the stern dark-bearded men of old
Endured great perils for the love of gold.
Where once I heard the chorus of my dreams,
The glad swift laughter of the mountain streams
Down rocky canyons, I can hear the crash
Of anvils, and the mill-wheel's rapid dash.
I hear the Iron hoof upon the trails

Stamp out the past in thunder, see the bales
Of oriental silks and spices piled
Where once the snake slipped through the grasses
wild.

There is enchantment in the wondrous change,
Greater than magic and more strivings strange
Than moved in demi-gods the poet saw
On Attic shores before the dawn of law.

And they who wrought these marvels in their trust,
Forsaken and forgotten, are they dust?
All this is theirs, their names endure today
But only love keeps guard above their clay.
What chivalry, what genius and what pride
Then flashed and faded in that mortal tide!
That new crusade, that more than Argive host
That moored its vessels by the Western coast,
That swept the waste, and tore the hills apart
And reft her treasures from the mountain's heart.
What dreams they dreamed upon the barren plains!
What stars they followed masters of the trains!
Those vanguards of a world, a world more strong,
A world more true, less servile to the wrong.
What seemed a mirage of the desert then
Was as a vision from the Lord to men
Who wrought their dreams' fulfillment, when they
died,
Great hearted pilgrims, with their arms beside.
God grant that from their ashes there may rise
The golden Phoenix of a world where cries

Of upright men for right and truth avail,
Where stainless justice holds an equal scale,
A world wherein the poor are filled with bread,
A world wherein the women need not dread!

THE ENGINEER

Through driving storm the mountain rose,
Yet in the car they felt no fear,
For life is safe, the stranger knows,
In the hands of the engineer.

And he, beyond that stony brow
That darkly frowns on village ways,
Sees far across the distance now
The promise of his fireside blaze.

He knows that in its circle warm
A bright-haired wife keeps watch for him,
And rocks the babe that feels no storm
Within its laces sleeping dim.

Shine star of home, through dusk and chill,
Shine out, sweet star, between the trees,
And guide him through the night of ill
To quiet hopes of faith and peace!

NEW ENGLAND'S GIFT

Beside the storied olive bough,
Beneath the arch clematis weaves,
The morning sunbeam flickers now
On slender sprays of apple leaves.

The waters from the mountain snows
Have fed their roots in Utah sands,
But where the salt tide ebbs and flows,
The tree that gave them being stands.

Where stern New England fronts the sea
That breaks on Narragansett shore,
Its cloud of bloom hung over me
And one who walks on earth no more.

You dreamed not all your offering meant,
Oh, constant friend, in choosing these!
The message of a deep content
Comes to me with these growing trees.

I feel that where Columbia's stars
Rule the blue heaven of the free,
There strength to break the captive's bars
And right the wrongs of old shall be.

The farmer there shall drive his plow
Through vales the savage called his own;
The fragrance of the orchard bough
Blow over fields where wheat is sown.

The waving grove, the fruited vine,
Shall take the place of sand and thorn;
And all that makes the race divine
Within a thousand homes be born.

IN SOUTH-LANDS

The sun on burning levels pours
A torrent of continuous light.
The river winds by stony shores
A serpent curve of silver white.

Oh, for the waters of the spring,
The tasselled fir-tree's wall of shade,
The mountain breeze's fragrant wing,
The cool, sweet flowers that will not fade!

The high Sierra's crested brow
Looks calmly down on sultry days.
A dim, blue shadow seeming now
Like some diviner resting-place.

A promised land, serenely fair,
The mother of a host of streams,
Whose presence, throned in upper air,
Rules the warm darkness of our dreams.

UTAH

Far out beyond the sound of bells,
Like Hagar in the wilderness,
She wept alone, by desert wells,
The victim of a vast distress.

By land and sea her blighted name
With jest and curse abroad was tossed;
The victim of a nation's shame,
They cast her forth among the lost.

Like those who fought at Valley Forge,
Her way-worn feet have stained the snow,
And at Creation's utmost verge,
She bore the worst of woman's woe.

A queen of tears, a prophetess,
She saw the stars of hope on high,
Saw vineyards of Canaan bless
Waste valleys naked to the sky.

She saw on barren hills the trees
Fold thick with fruit round waving grain,
And heard the summer song of bees
Across the sweeps of thirsting plain.

She dared the paths no man had trod,
Mysterious deeps that women shun,

A crying witness unto God,
Who would not let His will be done.

And yet the strength of martyrs shines
Beneath those steadfast brows of hers.
She felt the passion that enshrines
The Lord who dwelt with wanderers,

A dreamer of the days of old,
Beside the remnant of a sea
That over lost Atlantis rolled,
Before our race began to be,

I see her rounded figure rise
From gardens fragrant after rain,
Sublimely dark her troubled eyes
Look past regret, despair and pain.

And past the perils of her prime,
She waits within the sunset hills
The coming of a nobler time,
Her own to welcome if she wills.

THE COLORADO RIVER

Mysterious river of the South;
Thy birth is where the cedar tree
Grows white with snows that thro' thy mouth
Drain darkly into Cortez' sea.

The people of the desert graves
Perchance by thee have wept their dead,
The watchers in the lone cliff-caves
Beside thee mixed their simple bread.

A spell of wonder and of woe
Thy name hath been thro' all the past,
And yet by thee the lines shall go
That link the world with steel at last.

The rolling smoke from iron steeds
Will dim the marble of thy walls,
The gorges where the wild-cat breeds
Return the engine's rapid calls.

The bells of learning and of prayer
Ring silver-sweet across thy tide,
And children gather roses where
The roving herds to-day abide.

But oh, the pain, thou fatal river,
Some hearts shall feel, tho' these things be!
For no man's effort can deliver
The sleepers who lie deep in thee.

AREZUMA

[On old Spanish maps the territory now known as Arizona is always called Arezuma. Modern writers say that the word is an Aztec one, meaning "silver-bearing," but this legend, current among the Pueblo Indians, who have some curious traditions of days before the Spanish Conquest, gives it another meaning.]

In a haze of mystery
Golden Arizona lies,
Lands whose ruins have no history
But dim tales that fret the wise.

Where the Gila's quiet waves
Wheel through valleys to the sea,
And the Colorado laves
Craggs impending fearfully.

Relics of a buried nation,
Skilled in all that man has known,
In their dusty desolation
Scorch beneath the Southern sun.

Round them clings a rare-told story
Of the Aztec warrior queen,
And her people's pride and glory
Ere the Spaniard crossed the main.

Once a golden-haired white maiden
Ruled a region rich and wide,
Half a waste, yet half an Eden,
Reaching to the Western side.

While she reigned the amplest measure
Flowed from Plenty's open hand;
Hills gave up their hidden treasure,
Waters fertilized the sand.

And her praises spread abroad
Through the width of many a land,
As the fairest dame that trod,
And the wisest in command.

But one day the soft air trembled
With a tidings dark and rude;
In the Northern wilds assembled
Unknown tribes, whose multitude

Came with conquering clamor nearer,
Left behind them only dead,
While before their march of terror
All in desperation fled.

To Arezuma's court one morn,
Envoys from the dusty band
Came in garments strangely worn,
Made, perhaps, on Asia's strand;

Came to proffer peaceful aid,
And a smoothly-worded prayer,

From the prince, their host obeyed,
That the queen his power would share.

Showed the plundered gems they brought,
Closed in many a golden bowl;
But no riches could have bought
Areztuma's royal soul.

She bade them tell their Northern king
She had pledged her solemn word
Never act of hers should bring
To her race a stranger lord.

With this word the heralds parted,
And the next brought threats of dread;
Up in arms the Aztecs started,
Their brave princess at their head.

But like locusts, thousands came
To the front, though thousands died;
Till at length the cruel flame
Ruined many a city's pride.

Then the queen, with all her train,
Fled for shelter to the steeps,
Where they scowl upon the plain,
Bare and stern as castle keeps.

There, this ancient legend tells,
Waiting for her day to dawn,
Ever young and fair, she dwells
In some valley yet unknown.

For, said Fate, when Montezuma
Comes to free his scattered race,
Then, too, exiled Arezuma
Will return to claim her place.

All has changed ; the victors then,
Vanquished now, have waned away,
Yet a rock-bred tribe of men
Keep of old beliefs a ray.

And their chieftain often dreams,
When the sun has left the West,
He beholds the promised gleams
Of that maiden's royal crest.

O'er the peaks she seems to rise,
In her hand a shining bow,
While brighter than those melting skies,
White and gold, her garments flow.

DEATH

Pitiless Angel, clothed in silences,
If darkened with interminable gloom
Or crowned with everlasting stars, who knows?
For those who leave us and go forth with thee
Are thenceforth deaf to any call of ours,
Most dread thy coming into happy halls,
Or flower-sweet vales alive with peaceful bees.

But men have looked for thee, dark Presence, long
And eager as a lover for a bride;
Called on thee as a friend and sought for thee
Among the desolations of the world,
In hollow caverns floored with roaring waves,
Waste summits shagged with pines, or flashing steel
Against the midnight when its thunder fires
Streamed crashing down the heavens, felt the sweep
Of thy cold wing beside them, yet they lived,
Lived till the hair waved white on temples bowed
Beneath the unrelenting weight of pain.
But in their eyes that passionate despair
Gave place to something, not content, but calm,
And they no longer fear thee, for thou art
Become as a companion, tried and strong,
One who goes onward and will yield no word
Of his deep secrets to a scornful world.

THE MAN OF WORKS

The Lord of Hades and the Shade of Death
Watched his birth hour, contending for his breath;
But the Nile gave him rescue, and he rose
Monarch of pain, deliverer of woes;
For him the Red Sea lifted up her waves,
He made a nation from a horde of slaves;
He set his foot on famine, and compelled
The rocks to own the royalty he held.
Hell had no horror for him; shapes of ill
That bruised his flesh, no spell to tame his will.
Who checked the Baltic tides, and over Rome
Swung in mid-air the glory of her dome?
Who raised the lost Atlantis out of void,
And gave a world to races overjoyed?
Who ploughed the continents and felled their trees,
And sent his voice across the shaken seas?
Who bridled cataracts, and made the sword
Of Heaven's light obedient to his word?
Who turned the rivers, and adorned the night
With newer stars throughout his cities bright?
Who made the fire his charioteer, and spun
Of drifting dust a crystal like the sun?
Who clothed the hopeless wilderness with green,
Setting the triumph of his name between
The trampling desert sands and golden homes?

Who reft the metals from malignant gnomes?
And taught despondent captives that a man
Was mightier than the universe could ban?

Swifter than whirlwinds, truer than the steel,
Strong as the cedar; yet alive to feel
The worth of his divinity, and down
Tread tyranny that faced him with a frown.

Who but a Man, disowned, dishonored, stoned,
By all that swollen insolence enthroned?
Who but a man, who, coming to his own,
Found that he stood upon the shore alone,
With the untrodden vastness looming blind
Before him, doom and destiny combined,
Till the impossible became his friend,
The unaccomplished lured him to the end?
The man who thought, and through his thinking
wrought

Such wonders as the fabled genii brought;
Who made the dream a substance, and could throw
The clay apart that hid the gold below.

Is this the creature bound by fetters? No!
Wherever light illumines he shall go.
Breaking all chains that touch him, and shall be
Kin to the lightning, fed with victory.
Heir of immortal prophecies, the son
The great All-Father loved to look upon,
And set above all things, and gave to wife
His crowning loveliness and named her Life.

DOLORINE.

The trader left his bride alone,
Who watched his parting still as stone.
"But soon I will return," said he,
"And with to-morrow's sun we'll be
Far on our way to vales we know,
Where thick and green the forests grow.
Again white walls and shining dome
Will rise and beam our welcome home.
Once more along the well known street,
We two will walk with happy feet."

The day wore on ; the burning noon
Sank into night, and broad the moon
Rose up and touched her scarlet shawl
Beside the old adobe wall.
But mourn for hope ! no horse's feet
Delight the watcher with their beat.
They sought by glen and river shore,
For he was seen alive no more.

The dark-eyed daughters of New Spain
With gentle pity soothed her pain.
She wept with them, but when they slept,
The vigil of her sorrow kept.
And, like a flood of fiery rain,
The maddening moonbeams vexed her brain,

The day's enduring fervor came
And lit her veins with wasting flame.
She marked the empty hours go by,
The barren earth, the blinding sky.
At sunset saw the light blue bands
Waver above the Eastern sands,
And past her window watched them go
The painted Ute or Navajoe.
Knew either held the buried truth,
The helpless secret of her youth.
And cried, "Oh give him back to me
Or break my heart and set me free!

The only one of all my race,
A stranger in a hateful place,
I cannot wish, I cannot pray,
Except that Death may turn my way."
And when three moons had filled with light,
The vastness of the Summer night,
She started, sighing, "Oh my life
Call me no more, I come true wife!"
She made no sound nor any call,
But glided softly past the wall
The sunken flats and long gray down
The ghastly mesas smooth and brown,
And far beyond, at morning, lay,
Cold as her chosen couch of clay.

NUMBER TEN

"I asked your sister, once," he wrote—
The handsome engineer—
And while her brother read the note,
She listened, smiling, near.
"I asked her if she'd have me then,
She said she didn't know;
To-day they give me Number Ten,
And up the road I go;
So, when she learns her mind," said he,
"She need but drop a line to me."

Her brother, eager for his friend,
Was answered in curt style,
"Well, if Joe waits for me to send,
He's sure to wait a while."
"She never cared," said Joe, who meant
No more her moods to sue.
Why don't he come? she thought, and spent
In tears an hour or two;
But laughed and hid her secret so
They said she'd found another beau.

So he went up with Number Ten,
And she, with flaming cheek,
Thought, "Worthless are the vows of men,
I'll not be first to speak."

But Number Ten, below the grade,
Was upside down, one day;
The couplings broke, a leap she made
Three hundred feet to clay,
The cars stood safe on track, but Joe,
Crushed among cinders, lay below.

The girl beside his coffin stood
And called him her's in vain;
With flowers decked the callous wood
And showered tears like rain.
"Oh! come to me," she cried, "my dear,
That I may tell you true;
I never knew, when you were near,
How much I cared for you.
No man, since you have left me free,
Again shall speak of love to me."

"MAC"

Worn out with hunger, heat and thirst,
That fireman and his engineer
Rushed down the road, a thunder burst,
To reach the rest that seemed so near.

For forty hours had neither slept,
But now the trip was nearly made,
When round a curve their engine swept
And hurled them headlong down the grade.

Dragging himself from torment, Mac,
Half senseless, set his strength to climb.
He gained the wreck upon the track
And flagged the coming train in time.

He died, poor fellow, and for him
The purple of the morning stars*
Will shine no more on mountains dim,
Above the roll of passing cars.

But let him claim the hero's tears,
Who thought of others in his pain.
For many a soldier Fame endears
Has won his badge with slighter strain.

*An engineer's poetic name for the large mountain columbine.

PART II



VISIONS AND VOICES

THE POETS' NOW

The poet once saw in his song
A mighty ministry,
And voiced through tumult, guilt and wrong
The gospel of the free!

He missed the golden gift that kings
Cast to the servile hind,
But his strong fancy spread her wings
In realms above mankind.

On him the camp-fire shed its light,
The peasant with his herds
Might learn his music on the height
Like Walter of the birds.

He reigned within the hearts of men
A king without a crown;
The songs he sang in sorrow then
Like pearls are handed down.

To-day the Singer skims the seas
That roll beneath his prow,
The notes that humor souls at ease
Are all he offers now.

He careth not that on the shore
Earth's weeping toilers dwell,

And, ah! the springs of Life no more
Are vocal to his spell.

Content if in some magazine
His silver strains are stored,
The polished shells that might have been
The trumpets of the Word!

The pen he wields may be, indeed,
A marvel for its grace;
But Genius, with a broken reed,
A mightier truth could trace.

THE STRAYED LAMB

"Had I not strayed," the lost one cried of old,
When the Redeemer penned it in the fold,
"I had not learned the wretchedness and cold
The heart endures left ignorant of Thee;
Nor seen how great the evil shapes may be
That at Thy Name collapse, recoil and flee.
Had I not gone my wilful way alone,
I should not now with suffering atone.
But all Thy coming meant I had not known."

NOTRE DAME

She of the lake, who cradled Lancelot's youth
Among the wild glooms of the Northern sea,
Where flying films of fantasy and truth
Were woven in the text of poesy,

A veiled enchantress, versed in mystic spells,
Sang to her charge upon the lonely moor,
Of Nature's faith a mighty rune which tells
More of the stern and strong than of the pure.

Thereafter, vanquished by that strength's excess,
Strained by the strife within he could not tame,
Doomed in love's name to life-long lovelessness,
He sank, at last, a great soul quenched in shame.

But thou, white Queen, Our Lady of the Snows,
Mother of hope, of wisdom and fair love,
Lift higher yet thy foster-sons than those
That lived in legend like the gods above.

Before thy shrine Pelayo's banner hung
Beneath the midnight of Asturian shades,
There dying Roland's broken sword was flung,
There thundered Bernard of the first Crusades.

There Valor's past in sunken glory lies,
But here, behold! with regal gifts oppressed,

A new world's peopled capitals arise,
Rich in the matchless manhood of the West.

The mountain valleys, dark below their pines,
The bare, wide plain whereon the sun is free,
The groves of palm, the fields of fruited vines,
The soft Pacific shores shall learn of thee,

And bid thee nurse, secure from deadly blight,
The golden chivalry, the arts sublime,
The stainless growth of generous minds whose light,
Like God's own word, shall save an evil time.

In gardens at thy feet the lily weaves
Her vestal fragrance with thy children's dreams,
And the sweet breeze that stirs the forest leaves
Bears silver chimes across a land of streams—

A land of power, where the throbbing waves
Of inland seas are laden with the spoil
Of broad Columbia's cities, treasure caves,
And thousand harvests of her bounteous soil;

A land of promise, whose triumphant towers
Sprang from the ash of scarce-extinguished fires,
Where the waste marsh was made to bloom with
flowers
And all whose being thrills with vast desires.

Farewell to starry dome and frescoed hall,
Calm lake and winding walks, fair Notre Dame
And long may future years of peace let fall
Their blessings on the honored Founder's name.

ABOVE THE WORLD

I see, against the Eastern sky,
With purpling pinnacles between,
The shadows of the mountain lie
On meadows bathed in living green.

There pine-trees fairer than the palm
Toss their broad boughs and feed with song
The winds that breathe a constant psalm
From all the glens where leaves belong.

Clear waters laugh down rippled sand
Where aspens quiver, and the ferns
Lift their pale crosiers in a band
Around the fountain's granite urns.

But rugged passes lead that way
By bitter wells and cruel crags,
Against whose banks of carmine clay
The flying cloud is torn to rags.

Is it not, Christ, by paths like these
Thou leadest those who trust in Thee?—
Above the world, where groves of peace
Live in the light the Blessed see!

Above the narrow ways we tread
The lilies of our garlands wait,
And catch the glories overhead
That break through Heaven's open gate.

OUR INHERITANCE

Creeds that old Greek and Hebrew taught the soul,
Fables Crusaders learned in Palestine,
The study of the Alchemist, and sign
Fraternal of the roving Mason's scroll,
The secrets of the stars that poets stole,
Stories of Roland, and the German mine
Wherein the kobolds held their rites malign,—
All having crossed the sullen ocean's roll
Through storm and change were scattered, racked
apart,
Transformed and twisted, as to feed the loom;
Till in our day of crude, mechanic art
Some hour of light the sunken blossoms start
With the ethereal charm of roses that consume
The dust of ages in distilled perfume.

JOAN AT COURT

The slow dawn opens wide, the morning air
Is fresh about the folds—Oh, why did God,
Creator grave, omnipotent, all-wise,
Single out me, among ten thousand maids,
To leave the quiet ways of womankind?
Had He no knight, with nerves of steel, and heart
Hard as unripen flint to work His will,
To free our land and smite the foes of France?
The honors of the Court are mine, and gold;
I move among them, holding back the jests
That break behind in slanders. I look 'round
And see the infinite foul violence,
The envy and the greed, the lurking smiles
Of those that hate but tremble, and I know
The cloud is gathering that will break, one day,
And sweep me to destruction. Gracious Lord!
Give back the valleys of my green Lorraine;
Give back the hopes, the flocks, the horse I loved
Before I knew this shameful thing, a court!
Yet, ah, my shrinking soul! can I forget
The cries that haunted all those woodland ways,
From ravaged homes and desecrated shrines,
Till all my blood was fire, and in the night
The stars danced thick before me and I heard
Voiced like the trumpet of the risen world:
"France, wanton-lost, a virgin may redeem!"

"Take, Lord!" I cried; "my love, my life, my soul—
But save my country!"

Then the Knight of God,
His high Saint Michael, with Saint Catherine came
To tell me many things; where lay the sword
Wherewith Martel drove back the infidel.

The rest, the midnight Loire, the stormy ride
By castled hill and barren moor, the strife,
Orleans and Rheims, are like a broken dream.
And Life will yet be as another dream.
Have mercy on Thy handmaid, Son of God!

LONGFELLOW

Departed wearer of the laurel crown,
In those brief moments when the dreaming soul
Unfolds the wing and loses earth's control,
On whom, we wonder, will thy gift come down!
Or near or far from thy New England town,
Where first I listened to the sound of song
From Eire's harp and Albynn's stormy throng,
And loved the magic of thy grave renown;
The pines primeval and the Northern sea,
The grim, lost rovers of the swamp and shore;
The stern exile who pierced the mid-earth's core;
The loss, the pain, the great soul's victory,
When Modin's heroes heard the war-cry swell
Through Syrian hosts, nor trembled at the knell.

ALL SOULS

For all the cold and silent clay
That once, alive with youth and hope,
Rushed proudly to the western slope,—
Oh, brothers, pray!

For all who saw the orient day
Rise on the plain, the camp, the flood,
The sudden discord drowned in blood,—
Oh, brothers, pray!

For all the lives that ebbed away
In darkness down the gulf of tears;
For all the gray departed years,—
Oh, brothers, pray!

For all the souls that went astray
In deserts hung with double gloom;
For all the dead without a tomb,—
Oh, brothers, pray!

For we have household peace; but they,
Who led the way, and held the land,
Are homeless as the heaving sand.
Oh, let us pray!

DANTE ALIGHIERI

When the blind Sire of Song awoke no more
The dreaming echoes of the Ionian shore,
His sounding harp lay silent many a day,
Till thou didst give those prisoned powers play.
Undying Virgil! and thy silver song
Through the stern night of ages rolled along;
When men grew weary of the shock of steel,
They loved with thee another life to feel;
To trace Aeneas o'er the midland sea,
And look with him on lowly Italy.

And yet thy notes, though ever sweet to hear,
At times fall strangely on a Christian ear.
Must this endure? Is there no lip that dares
Send o'er those strings the breath of holier airs?
Ah yes, the melancholy breeze that winds
Through the dim cloisters of Ravenna's pines,
Sobbing for the eternal mysteries
And nameless terrors of the troubled seas,
Hath roused a soul, lamenting there, alone,
His thwarted life and country overthrown.

Too self-controlled to lightly tell the smart
Of the great torment busy at his heart,
Like the grim Genius of those moaning groves;

Through their dim shades the dark-robed exile
 roves,
Then issuing lifts his brow, and on the wire
Of his proud harp strikes with a master's fire.

Behold, tombs open, and the dead arise
With all their stories written in their eyes.
There weeps a band within the scowling gloom,
For lives that drifted idly on to doom.
There, lost Francesca checks her sobs, to show
The love that wrought unutterable woe;
Each dolorous circle of the dread domain
Piercing the heart with separate cries of pain,
Till the swift passage of angelic wings
Soothes those sharp chords to tender quiverings,
And, over waves that tremble to the sunbeams, rolls
The glorious anthem of delivered souls.
Then all the air is vocal with the pure desires
Born in the midst of penitential fires.
Sweet sounds a chorus from Elysian bowers,
And lo! the Rose, within a cloud of flowers.
His loved Beatrice, with her olive crown
And snow-white veil, upon his grief looks down.

Up through the realms of everlasting light
Moves the rapt spirit; on his straining sight
Splendor on splendors, joys undreamed of, shine,
Till lost in bliss he worships the Divine.
Woe to thee, poet! that thou must descend
From those bright spheres where pain is at an end,

To search for peace a world that offers thee
Only the salt, salt bread of poverty.
Yet now thy wandering feet have sacred rest,
And fullest homage from the new-born West.

A SAINT'S SCORN

Saint Magdalene of Pazzi, saith a tale,
Wrapped in divinest thought, beneath her veil,
In her still shelter knelt alone at prayer,
When loud a furious foot upon the stair,
A cloud of darkness and a bitter cry:
"The Lord hath given me power—even I—
To drag thee, woman, by the hair, along
Through the steep street, where all may see thy
wrong!"

"Indeed," she answered, "Sayest thou so, in sooth!
Then hasten: it shall never cost me ruth.
What the Lord wills, who made me, that shall be,
Even the crown of blessedness to me."
Swift as he came, the Enemy had fled
Ere the last word his smiling foe had said.

Trust Him, my soul, whose "everlasting arms"
Abide through forty centuries' alarms;
Huge swelling phantoms are the powers of ill,—
Face them unflinching: He is ruler still!

*THE FALL OF THE PROUD**[Isaiah, Chapters xiii, xxi and xlvii.]*

I hear a sound like waves of sand
Wind-driven through a dismal land;
Hear mountains shake with deep alarms,
With noise of nations set in arms;
The roll of wheels is in mine ears,
And clanging jar of ordered spears.

The Lord hath said: Mine hour is nigh,
And vengeance wakes the boding sky;
Set up My standard on the height.
O Elam call thy banded might!
Media, from thy land of rock
Leap like the lion on the flock.
No treacherous hands shall longer spoil
The harvest of My people's toil.

Weep thou! great source of splendid sin;
No more through thy broad streets the din
Of song and laughter shall resound.
Alone shalt thou, a queen discrowned,
Despairing mourn thy vanished pride.
Along thy courts shall serpents glide,
Monsters in pleasant gardens lie,
Where fountains shone the bitter cry.
Above thy towers the owls shall hoot,

The bramble bind her wretched root.
Never again shall foot awake
The silence of thy deadly brake.
No Arab lift his fluttering dome,
Nor flock among thy thickets roam.

This is thy sentence, cruel land,
The Lord hath sworn and it shall stand!

CHARITY

If I should pray, whose prayers are answerless—
Who ask of Heaven less in hope than fear,
As poor men knock at an unwilling door;
Who had no youth and so should have no age;
This would I ask of the great Lord of Love:
If sorrow chill my heart as I have seen
It turn the hearts of others; if my pain
Should make me careless of the tears that flow
Too fast around me, wanting one to save.
Then spare me Lord, O, let my path be smooth!
But if, from out my deep affliction, I
Might draw a healing balm, a cordial power
To blunt the edge of sorrow, to uplift
Weak souls through suffering to God and hold
Strong ones from rash and measureless despair,
Come Grief, and I will call thy cold face fair.

TASSO

O Leonora, Leonora, how I turn
The narrow circuit of my prison bounds, and yearn
For that remembered presence that to me
Was as the sun that lights the dark blue sea,
And silvers all her dancing waves, and pours
The tide of life along her dreamy shores.
How proudly in Ferrara's groves we learned
From volumes where the light of ages burned.
How fondly to the music of the wave,
Our thoughts wove into union, sweet and grave,
Till I believed that God, in making me,
Had shared with thine my spirits' mystery.
And, wearied with the fever of the brain,
Lifted mine eyes to thine, as souls in pain,
May greet consoling angels; but my heart,
Fearful of stinging fools that slander start,
Flushed me, and shook my voice, with thee beside,
For I grew silent, and apart would bide
When most I longed to meet thee. O, too fair,
How much of all this sorrow did'st thou share?

But thou wert to me as the vestal one
Shrined in the cloister shade, until the sun
Drove us, one morning, to that balcony
'Round which the oriental jasmines sigh.

I helped the slender hand, my dazzled eyes
Held holy as the bread of Paradise,
Divide its garlands, touched the fingers fine,
And pressed them for a moment's space in mine.
Less royal then, but dearer, though I felt
My sudden shame through cheek and temples melt.
But on thy lips met laughter's mocking prime.
"In leaving, not in taking, lay thy crime."

Alas, my Princess! for thou wert a star
That shone on all the wretched, but didst mar
The life of him who loved thee and drew near
The terror of thy brightness; I am here
A most unhappy captive, yet they say
That thou hast sent a suitor's crown away—
Unless, perchance my own heart made the tale—
For I am worn with anguish; weak and pale
Combat distempered fancies; then, O, God,
Was I not worthy of the men that trod
In Este's halls, my word, my sword as true?
Nor had their evil passions rusted through
The glory of my manhood. Nature's gross
Had never felt such tenderness and loss,
But, turning to less spiritual charms,
Forgot one woman in another's arms.

It is all ended; in mine agony
I thought the eyes of Mary looked on me,
When I was mad with wrongs, and 'round my cot
Stormed phantoms of the damned. Upon this hot,
Wild brow she laid her sinless hand, and healed

The burning woes wherewith my senses reeled.
Dream if it were, no less a blessed thing,
And she might pity me, for I did sing
Her praises and her son's and have been pure
Whatever ills of other sort I may endure.

Doubtful are all things—doubtful even the joy
Of bridal roses to the lovesick boy.
My love destroyed me. I served God, and He
Made me defenders in my misery,
And wrought a certain peace upon my soul,
And gave Crusader's fame to my control.
Now, I have heard the Holy Father's power
Is working to unlock my sombre tower.
Good friend, kind heart, I wish he may succeed,
For I should like, ere dying, to be freed,
To see the glorious sunlight streaming far
Along the pathway of the Caesar's car,
And the blue mountains, and the sacred sod
Whereon Sebastian glorified his God!

A NIGHT IN EGYPT

[THIRD CENTURY.]

In those old centuries when the speech of Rome
Today unuttered, made the world its home,
Where Memphian towers, along the sacred Nile,
Looked on themselves for many a splendid mile,
Night breezes blew, and wall and propylon,
Sphinx, pyramid and palmy river shone
Beneath an orb that rolled above the sands
Bright as the sun of colder lying lands.
Yet not the glories of that rising moon
Out blazed the Consul's sumptuous saloon
Where countless cressets wavering lustre poured
On marble floor and hospitable board.
Draped with the woven snow of Egypt's loom,
And garlanded by her unrivalled bloom,
Her silver lotos, boughs from citron groves
And the red wreath the Queen of Beauty loves.

Heaped was that board with all that sense could
 please,
The honeyed amber of Hymettian bees.
With steaming meats from distant shores and seas.
And flame cheeked fruitage of Hesperian trees;
Melons of gold with aromatic dates,
Ripe, royal cherries from the Pontic states.

Delicious figs, and dewy grapes, sunkissed
To globes of topaz and of amethyst.
All blushed through crisp, green leaves in silver
stands.

The costly plunder of artistic lands.
While, highest prized, in graceful urns there shone
The liquid madness of each generous zone.
The lighter flood, whose scintillating rills
Sprang to the sunbeam on Falernian hills,
With Cypria's bitter vintage burned beside
The beaded Chiann and the kingly tide
From Syria's vales, with bleeding showers
Breathing the fragrance of Zacynthian bowers.

And for the guests, sure never goodlier throng
Moved to the music of a minstrel's song,
Than those Lucilius, sternly gratified
To feel his influence, around him eyed.
His own proud country's stalwart sons were there,
With their rich costume and commanding air.
There, dark Numidian princes smiled to be
Linked with their Roman friends in revelry,
There, men of Athens talked with sages, born
Where Jordan's waves o'er vain deliverance mourn.
Trade kings from Tyre, and those luxurious towers
Built on the sea by Macedonian powers.¹
Gazed on a Parthian, lithe as desert barb,
In flowing hair and gold embroidered garb.

(1)—Alexandria.

Nor lacked the feast those living flowers of earth
That bloom most brilliantly in times of mirth.
Daughters of Nile, who, like their sister star,
Might well weave spells to set the world at war.²
Maids with the sunny smiles and winning grace
Nature grants only to the Grecian race,
And Roman ladies, whose imperial eyes
Had caught the splendor of their native skies.

But now the voice and laughter, through the hall,
Ebb into silence, while the eyes of all,
Seem to announce some bright imagining
Of coming pleasure, lifts delighted wing.
They greet a poet, then, although his name
Shines not to-day upon the scroll of fame,
Far known and honored, one who tuned his lay
Less for the hero than the young and gay.

Listen, arising from his silken bed,
And lifting, Bacchant fashion, o'er his head
A crystal vase with ruddiest nectar filled
That ever fountains of the Sun distilled,
He sings; the echoes still more soft and clear,
Come trembling back from carven niche and pier,
Till even the spell bound slaves forget the need
That bids them instant on their mission speed,
And every listener's kindling cheek betrayed
Too willing subjects of the power he swayed
Souls, that like empty ships were swept along,
They cared not whither, by that tide of song.

(2)—Cleopatra.

“O, sing of the sunbeam and hallow the bower
That cradled in beauty the Vine,
And hail Him, the God, through whose life ruling
 power
Man may, like a being divine,
Lose cares that will creep over all.
The brightest of Beauty’s young glances
 How pale and how cold would they be,
Compared with her smile when it dances
 Twice brilliant, like stars on the sea,
In the breast of a current like this.

From this spring the glimpses of glory,
 That break o’er the souls of the brave,
Illumining sepulchres gory,
 As over a down-dashing wave,
Burns the bow that is born of its fall!”

Who would have dreamed, amid that heathen train
Whose lips caught up the riotous refrain,
To meet with one whose erring feet had trod
The stainless temples of the Living God,
Yet so it was; yon dark-eyed poet drank
The fount of life beside the Tiber’s bank,
And, early orphaned by a foreign blade,
His childhood blossomed in the altar shade;
But, older grown, he cared not for the lays
Acolytes chanted in their Saviour’s praise,
Whose buried echoes oft, at dead of night,
Stirred the great capital with strange affright.

No! best he loved to linger o'er the string
Touched by the courtier of the Samian king.³
Or pages where the Lesbian poured her soul,⁴
In passion frozen by no strict control
And those were ages when the dear Lord's name
Brought to His followers suffering and shame.
The lowliness of which His doctrine spoke,
Galled this proud dreamer like an iron yoke.
To him, who loved the sweet world's light and bloom,
How dark that Faith whose altar was a tomb!

So—he was young, and youth is ever fain,
To trade its birthright for a trifling gain—
It was no marvel, blessed or cursed with keys
To Nature's most enchanting harmonies,
He won warm welcome from the concourse gay
Dancing on roses down the deadly way.
Thus on his brow he placed the laurel twine
And sank reflection in the sparkling wine,
But not remorse, for there were those could tell
Of midnight watches, when he, shuddering, fell
To depths of gloom, whose melancholy power
Matched his wild gladness in a festal hour.

Oh false, deluded wanderer; couldst thou see
The one true friend that, waiting, weeps for thee,
To whom thy young soul, innocent from Heaven,
To love, and guard and guide it there, was given.
And he hath striven, witness times of rest,

(3)—Anacreon.

(4)—Sappho, called Lesbian, from her birthplace.

When holier whispers thrilled along thy breast,
And visions merciful that warned thy soul
Back from the doom such reinless action toll.
But tremble now, apostate, 'tis the hour
That stamps thy fate with good or evil power.
Oft have that watcher's prayers held back the sword,
The avenging wrath of his insulted Lord,
And yet he lingers, though not angel's hope
Can longer with thy fatal madness cope.
Turn from the grace now knocking at thy door
And it shall greet thee never, never more. ♥

As from the bowl the Singer's eyes withdrew,
And 'round the board their fevered glances threw
Hands, fragrant as the flowers of Paradise,
The parting spirit laid upon those eyes,
That angel touch! it smote the fair deceit.
Revealing every heart that round him beat
Bare as it lay to one who ne'er that hall
Had entered but for Mercy's solemn call.

Oh horror! what deformity of crime.
Appals the vision, not the stagnant slime
Of Lybia's sickening swamps, could freeze the blood
With dark revealings of a viler brood
Sure hell itself has poured upon the air
The foulest features ever nurtured there;
Nor pride nor beauty shielded, lust of gain
Had stamped Lucilius with the sign of Cain.
The young Corinthian, on whose burnishd brow,
Like morn on snow late hung the rosy bough.

More dire appears than Demon of the Grave
At midnight stealing from his charnel cave.
Alas! on many a scene Sin's curses light,
But never lovelier knew a darker blight.
The pomp of revelry, the glittering vest,
Trinket of gold and jewel flaming crest;
What were they all but mockeries fair?
Like lilies tangled in a monster's hair.

But speak, bold singer, why start wildly back
With eyes like traveler's by the tiger's track.
Lips ashen pale, and features fixed as one
Whose very soul is curdling into stone!

This is no gathering of satyrs rude,
No savage hovel's low born multitude.
These are thy Deities! For *their* applause
Thy hand cast outrage on thy childhood's cause.
And what art thou? Shall thy lip dare to blame
Thou recreant follower of a purer flame?
Nay! thou dost well, at last to turn thy gaze
To yon pure figure, crowned with loving grace.
Whose lifted hand bids thee away, away,
From this proud festival's polluted ray.

Untasted now, the cup, so late adored,
A broken rainbow, crashes on the board,
And a dark figure past the swarthy guard,
Flies to the desert, silent, silver-barred.
Up sprang the startled revelers through the hall

In strange dismay, with half formed word and call.
Then quiet came, as the assembly laughed,
Its scornful pardon of "the brainsick craft."

Long years went by and scarcely one, of they
Who met that eve, yet looked upon the day.
Among his native sands a rival shaft
The slender Parthian's life libation quaffed.
Pannonia's mountains saw Lucilius fall,
Stabbed by a traitor, on his castle wall,
The various means with which Death deals a blow,
Storm, plague, or weapon laid his victims low,
When, 'mid the sands a hermit died, whose toil
Had won a garden from that barren soil
A bower whence want went ne'er unsatisfied,
Where tempted spirits found a patient guide;
Where shy gazelles for sure protection fled,
And winged warblers from his hand were fed.
Died at the matin hour, kneeling alone,
In tears before his crucifix of stone;
And, ere from rocks the sun had dried the dew
To chanting monks came one that each well knew,
But altered gloriously, as expanded bells
Transcend the trammels of their cradle cells,
Was he who told what bade each pious breast
Lift thanks to Heaven for its envoys blest.

With all they knew of art his tomb they graced,
And in their records his strange story traced;
To touch that tomb long after, pilgrims came,

While each worn penitent invoked the name
And heard the tale of this secluded priest,
Once the mad guest of the forgotten feast!

Pilgrim and monk long since have passed away,
The shrine they loved has crumbled into clay.
No more the Roman eagle spreads her wings
Above the palaces of trembling kings;
Pride, pomp and power, a common fate have met.
'Tis well, for we claim better days; and yet,
Should like betrayal on its brightness fall
Woe to the mirth of many a banquet hall!

NOTE—The guests reclined at Roman festivals. At the time when Christianity, great in simple poverty, came to the heathen world, those startled, amid its pleasures, by some revelation, found in the desert solitude which is the only safeguard for tempted souls when every social gift is perverted to the service of evil, then the case to a degree that can be but lightly touched upon in our time.

THE CRITIC

"Sing of love," the critic cried;
"Sing of love, for love is sweet!"
And the singer answering, sighed,
For the secret of her soul
To her cheek the color stole.
Memory woke from sacred slumbers.
Till the heart broke with her numbers.

And he closed his eyes to draw!
"Lighter notes for lighted hall."

Came the sound of flute and viol,
Tempting eager steps to trial;
Yet the very waltz had strains
Swift and sharp as shooting pains.
Woke the listener's languid wrath:
"Sweep dead roses from my path,
Better sabre-stroke than kiss,
Bitter sweet as Pleasure's is!"

Then the bearded captain rose,
Showed with pride his battle scars;
Half in music, half in prose,
Told the story of his wars;
When the shot, through crashing trees,
Drove the sound of stormy seas.

Death and fury in his words
Clashed with laughter through the chords.
For plashy isles where sedges wave
And willows weep the nameless brave.
Next he mourned—but, "Cease the song,
Out of taste and over long."

Angry foot the pavement spurning.
Answered him the soldier turning,
"Take the truth, O fool and blind!
Idle song for idle mind.
Leave to Love and youth their spells,
Call the jester with his bells.
His the music without sorrow,
Thine the life that has no morrow."

FAREWELL FLOWERS

When the light fails and over me the sod
Conceals, at last, the fleshly robe I wore,
Bring me the lilies that, when Joseph's rod
Was chosen as the sign for Christ, it bore.

The spiny juniper, whose message is,
"Deliverance from evil;" and the true
Gold-hearted daisies, dear to me for this:
That on Life's bleak and barren spots they grew.

And the shy violets, whose dreaming eyes
Have kept the color of God's open door;
Roses and pinks, incarnate with the dyes
Of mortal loves I shall possess no more.

THE SAINT

In the old, pleasant days in Italy,
When baron cut the throat of baron, and
The highways streamed with roistering cavaliers,
A certain saint whose prayers and penances
Had wrought his body to pure spirit, sought
By cries tormenting the still ear of Heaven
To learn what point of holiness he held.
And in the night there came a dream to him
Wherein his angel pointed, saying, "Go
Thou forth through wild Calabria, and he,
Thy peer, will meet thee at the third day's close,
Low in the entry of a rocky pass."

So he rose up, and fared along the way
With painful footsteps, till the sinking sun
Shone level in his eyes; and, at the door
Of a rude wine-shop, on a ruined bench,
With sidewise tilted head, a ragged man
Sat humming an old song,

But for a voice
That warned his heart, the saint had passed in scorn.
"Friend," said he, doubtfully, "I was sent here
Hoping to learn what holy deeds of thine
Outweigh my penances." And the other
Laughing spake:

“Little have I done; my wife
And I, old people, earn our scanty bread
By selling food to passers; but my youth,
Old Father, held far more of war than toil.
Nay, I could show thee scars—but once I drove
Some bandits from a shrinking girl, who cried
For fear of harm, and brought her to my wife,
Who sent her to her convent; more of good
I cannot reckon in this life of mine.”

Then homeward to his cloister went the Saint,
And prayed: “Forgive me, Lord, that I dared set
My name among Thy servants! Let me be
Henceforth with sinners Thou didst come to save.”

~ ~

THE VETERAN

"This is glory!" says the Captain,
Lapsing into darkest dreams,
When the pleasant music streams
From the homes of happier men.

Better you had fallen, oh, Captain!
In the red storm of the war,
Than to learn how strange you are
To the ways of modern men.

Then they gloried in the splendor
Of your strong right arm and true;
Have they time to think on you
Now their shops need no defender?

In your eye the light is prouder
Than we care to look on now,
There's a set scowl on your brow,
On your cheek the stain of powder.

All you had you cast unsparing
In the vanguard of the truth—
Courage, hope, and handsome youth—
Are your laurels worth the wearing?

Fighting with the marsh land fever,
Drenched at night with chilling rains,

You have won the cruel pains
Not to leave till life forever.

Pardon me the doubt, old Captain,
In the crowds that clog the earth
Lives like yours have greater worth
Than a score of lesser men!

ROME

Her tent arose upon the Latin hills,
Crowned with the star of valor; in her breast
She felt the throbbing of a soul's unrest;
She battled with the seas, the winds, the wills
Of mighty rivals; reaping for the mills
Of unknown gods a harvest east and west.
Bound the far isles, and pushed her iron crest
Beyond the heights where Alpine tempest shrills.

She lost and won the stakes all men desire;
And yet, though twenty centuries have flown,
She is not wholly desolate nor alone;
But in her heart immortal lives the fire
That draws the pilgrim to her storied throne,—
The spiritual youth time cannot tire
Nor evil vanquish till the world expire.

THE CAPTIVE

The stars shone over Syria's sand,
The night wind cooled the glowing land,
When by the calm Euphrates' wave
Was heard the plaint of Hebrew slave,
Oh! Lord of power, Lord of thrones,
Pity, he sang, Thy suffering ones,
Fainting beneath Assyria's rod,
We call on Thee, our father's God.
The vines of Eschol shed no more
The tide that kings were proud to pour,
Unfrightened now the fleet gazelle
May come to drink at Hesbon's well.
The untilled earth no harvest yields;
Wild asses dwell in Sion's fields,
Fierce wolves around her temples howl,
And thro' her streets the foxes prow!.
Her children, Babel's cruel scorn
So long, so long, O Lord, have borne.
The harp that once was waked for Thee
They bid us tune to revelry;
But who could sing his country's strains,
To gladden him who forged her chains?
What voice, unbroken, breathe the lays
That tell, 'mid grief, of happy days,
And thrill each heart with longing dreams
Of distant Judah's rock-born streams?

They mock our tears, Thy Name despise,
Oh! let Thy vengeance shake the skies,
Tho' sinful days our race has known,
Still, still, great God, we are Thine own.
Thou, who didst make the Red Sea wave
The proud Egyptian's living grave,
By Whose command fresh fountains broke
From Horeb's flint at Moses' stroke,
Whose glories shone round Sinai's peak,
When from its height Thou deign'dst to speak,
Oh! hear Thy captive nation cry,
Help send us from Thy throne on high;
Send down Thy hosts on Babel's walls,
And sink in flames her guilty halls,
Dark as the doom her deadly hate
Bestowed on Israel, be her fate;
Happy the sword that smites her crown
Happy the hoof that treads her down!

HAGAR

Her voice is in my ears, her eyes
Yet haunt me night and day;
Where is the angel that shall say, "Arise!"
To that poor helpless clay?

What hast thou done for her, O man,
To whom her Father gave
Life's choicest gifts to ornament thy span,
While she broods there—a slave?

What hath she not endured to gain
Justice in truth from thee?
Through generations nursed in pain
The life that was to be.

She gave thee love, receiving shame,
A draft unmixed with myrrh;
The world that drove her forth, became
Thy fawning worshipper.

Never among the sons of men
Shall peace triumphant be
Until *her* plea for right is heard, and then
Earth's darkest ills shall flee.

The fount of her unutterable wrong
Shall yet be cleansed, and flow
For healing of the nations that so long
Cared nothing for her woe.

MARY OF BETHANY

Just for one moment let me bide,
Lord of the Promise, at Thy feet.
Our cottage eaves are low and wide,
The palm grove quivers with the heat.

In that one moment lift for me
The burden laid upon my soul,
That in a vision I may see
The pain-sick world at last made whole.

Forgotten distaff, well and bread—
Forgotten all things, in delight
That Thou, of whom our fathers read,
Hast brought the dawn of Israel's night

What matters bitterness and scorn—
Waste whispe s of a race that dies—
When glories of that day, new-born,
Reveal Creation's glad surprise?

A MIXED MARRIAGE

[HER SIDE.]

Yes, reverend father, all you say is true,
And more than true, is doubtless kindly meant.
But how can lonely, silent souls like you
Judge of the grounds for woman's discontent?

Grant that I give him up and that I am
Vexed with vain longings all my life alone.
Could I endure it, hating cloistered calm?
I am not made of iron, nor of stone.

Like the grave women niched in chapel gloom,
I love still household ways, small household cares,
And think that desolate would be my doom
Were I reduced to live upon my prayers.

Don't think I mean to wound you; God who sees
The thousand evils of this world of ours,
Horror, and wrong, and vast iniquities,
Will pardon me, perhaps, some happy hours.

THE PRIEST'S BELOVED

Pity his fate! the world, condemning, cried—
The priest who takes a phantom for a bride;
A wild idea, nurtured in the brain
Of brooding solitaires dazed with pain.
While other men set household fires alight
With hope and love and peace to keep them bright,
Homeless and childless, he shall sit apart,
Neglected guardian of a buried heart.

But he replied: "Ah, no! My bride behold,
Fairer than lilies tipped with summer's gold;
Rich in ten thousand loves, and strong in those
Tall sons who hear her name where mountain snows
Look down green vales, on shores of balm and spice
In all the homes where her blue banner flies.
Praise well your loves, for dear and true they be;
But which hath brought such gifts as mine to me?"

A MOTHER'S THOUGHT

Not when beside the Cross her station keeping
Doth Mary seem most mournful to my eyes ;
But, in that quiet hour, when others sleeping
Dreamed not of Love's impending sacrifice.

When large Judean stars came dropping slowly
Out of the fragrant Night's mysterious gloom,
And she recalled Simeon, old and holy,
Pale with his presage of Messiah's doom.

When the fair Child her love could shield no longer
Should bear the burden of the sins of men,
Longing the while, with desolate heart hunger,
For even such shelter as the foxes' den.

In the dark shadow that fell then upon her
She saw the sorrows that were yet to be,
The false disciple and the court dishonor,
The thirsting Victim high on Calvary.

ALL SAINTS

Now, in the valleys of the golden year
Men gather fruits and bind their rustling sheaves,
Amid the glories of the tinted leaves.
And thus the Bride of Christ, supremely dear
To His great heart, presents her harvest here;
Won where 'round rocky isles gray ocean heaves,
From deserts gaunt, from gloomy haunts of thieves,
Strange wastes of woe, and combats fierce and drear.

"Lo, through wild wanderings," she teaches, "these
Though sin and doubt, through all the world malign,
Redeemed and radiant, reached the heights of peace.
So mayst thou, too, attain to rest divine,
Blest as the earth, when all her woodlands blaze,
Through the warm light of blue October haze."

THE HOST OF DREAMS

As I have seen, along some mountain height,
The volumed sweep of thunder storms advancing,
All their broad wings with rapid lightning glancing,
Hush even terror's whispers into flight.

Thus, cloud like, up the valley's breadth they rolled,
Their flashing files in mounted order wheeling,
Their banded music through the hillsides pealing,
And standards, streaming pride from every fold.

A tide so grand in undisputed swell,
That fear within the heart became a glory;
As children, listening to some deathful story,
Love on its dark magnificence to dwell.

LOVE'S FREEDOM

The burdened years, by thousands, rolled away
Wherein, apart, the great All-Father saw
His wayward sons, in stormy currents draw
From their first home beside the rising day
To colder vales, ringed round with peaks where lay
The virgin white of snows that never thaw;
And lose the guide He gave—one lamp of Law,
That shed on Judah's wastes its lonely ray.

But life was dark, in spite of Law, till Love
Took up the lamp, and in His mighty hands
It brightened, broadened, like the sun above,
Through the dim reaches of despairing lands.
And Love cried out: "Man, thine infirmity
I come to share, that I may set thee free!"

OMAR'S CONQUEST

In the world of sand, where Mahomet's star
Flamed over the veering chances of war,
Where the yellow Euphrates seaward flows,
A broken tribe had turned on its foes,
With torn burnoose and yataghan
Stained by the failing life of man.
And, beside them, women and little ones
Between the river and Omar's guns.

One last wild charge ere the Arab men
Are crushed, like the rank, green growth of the fen
And there, at the head of his horse ride free
Their chieftain's Zilla and Zobeide.
Daughters of Hassan's strong old age,
Pure as the doves under Allah's throne,
True at heart as the Prophet's own,
With the glad, swift flight of birds from a cage
They dashed at the troops; but the horses turned,
And the maids were captured by men they spurned.

They had sought free death, and alone they stood
Slaves to the victor and hopeless of good.
But on Omar's stern, brown features broke
The light of a smile, as their doom he spoke—

"My Leila, be kind to these desolate girls;
Teach them of glory and guard them as pearls."
And the Pacha's wife, with a woman's art,
Took the breathless captives with her apart.
In a dim kiosk of her gardens, far
From the hot red breath of malignant war,
She gave them bright robes and chains of gold
And much of her own rich jewels she told.

"All these may the bride of a brave man claim,"
Said Leila the fair, but no answer came.
Splendid in silks and plaited hair,
But black of brow as souls in despair,
By Omar's order they stood one day,
While his youngest and bravest passed that way;
For some of his best had sought to wed
The wild maids whom old Hassan bred.
"Choose now from these," as they went by,
Said Leila behind their screens with a sigh.
"For brave and handsome and strong and true
Is every emir who asks for you."
But they answered not, till the Pacha's voice
Offered to each the gift of her choice.

"My Lord!" cried Zilla, the tallest, "content
Were we with the hard, rude life of the tent.
Leave the wind to her freedom, unloose the wild
dove;
To our people restore us, spare those whom we love;
Better bread from the hand of a friend, O my lord,
Than to live like a queen on the gains of the sword.

Send us back to the father who trained us to feel
The thought of dishonor more sharp than the steel."

Then Omar arose: "God speaketh, O daughter, to-
day,
Through the lips of a woman; have each her own
way.
Go back to the tents of your people, and ride
Forever in safety, for all on my side."

No more than this doth the chronicle
Of the fierce brown riders of Asia tell;
Only that Omar rose in his fame
Till the desert echoes were loud with his name;
And deep in the heart of the desert bands
Was love that heeded his least commands.

THE FALL OF VENICE

She piled her coffers to the brim with gold;
Her bond, her maidens' bloom, her scholars' fame
Each, in its turn, the trader's ware became.
She held high revel while the pirate's hold
Bore east the hope of Christian youth she sold.
Laughing, she gloried in her evil name,
Her heart stone-cold, and all her senses flame,
Her sunlit years in silken softness rolled.

Her splendor passed. No subject ocean heaps
Its wealth upon her shores. No royal tunes
Flutter the echoes of forsaken deeps.
But green oblivion, like a dragon, sleeps
In her dumb markets, while a foul ooze steeps
Her rotting palaces and dead lagoons.

SAINT THOMAS, THE DOUBTER

“Not I, not I will bind my soul for wiles
Of subtle speech, majestic mien or call
That offers life eternal unto all.
From the forgotten past, whose long, dim aisles
House the forgotten dead, the cumbrous piles
Of shaken, helpless gods about me fall;
And each hath left a warning on the wall,
And each hath led the hope of spectral files
That prayed and loved and worshipped, and are gone
Into the darkness and the dread afar.
I walk the earth, and do not dream, with John,
That we the heirs of all the prophets are.
My Lord and God, prove Thou art him who died,
And find mine firmer than a faith untried!”

THOU ART BUT DUST

Remember, man, rest will be thine,
Dust, and the pleasing hush of death.
Above thy bed the stars will shine,
The night wind pass with balmy breath;
Nor strife nor care nor enmity
Shall mar thy deep tranquillity.

No more shall passion, grief or pain
Molest thee, lying soft and still;
But the light touch of summer's rain
Shall break, with buds, the grassy hill.
No vain ambition, wrath or pride
Will come to vex thy lone bedside.

Poppies and balm thy hands shall hold,
Sweetness and sleep shall seal thine eyes;
No morn again bid thee behold
The weary world that wakes and cries,
Day after day, for bitter bread,
For husks on which the swine have fed.

Rest in the mother's arms, O man,
Cometh to each; the parent dust
Shall soon complete thy longest span.
There shall the weary and the just
Sleep in their turn; and none, not one,
Shall call thee back to toil undone.

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